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DECEMBER 2025
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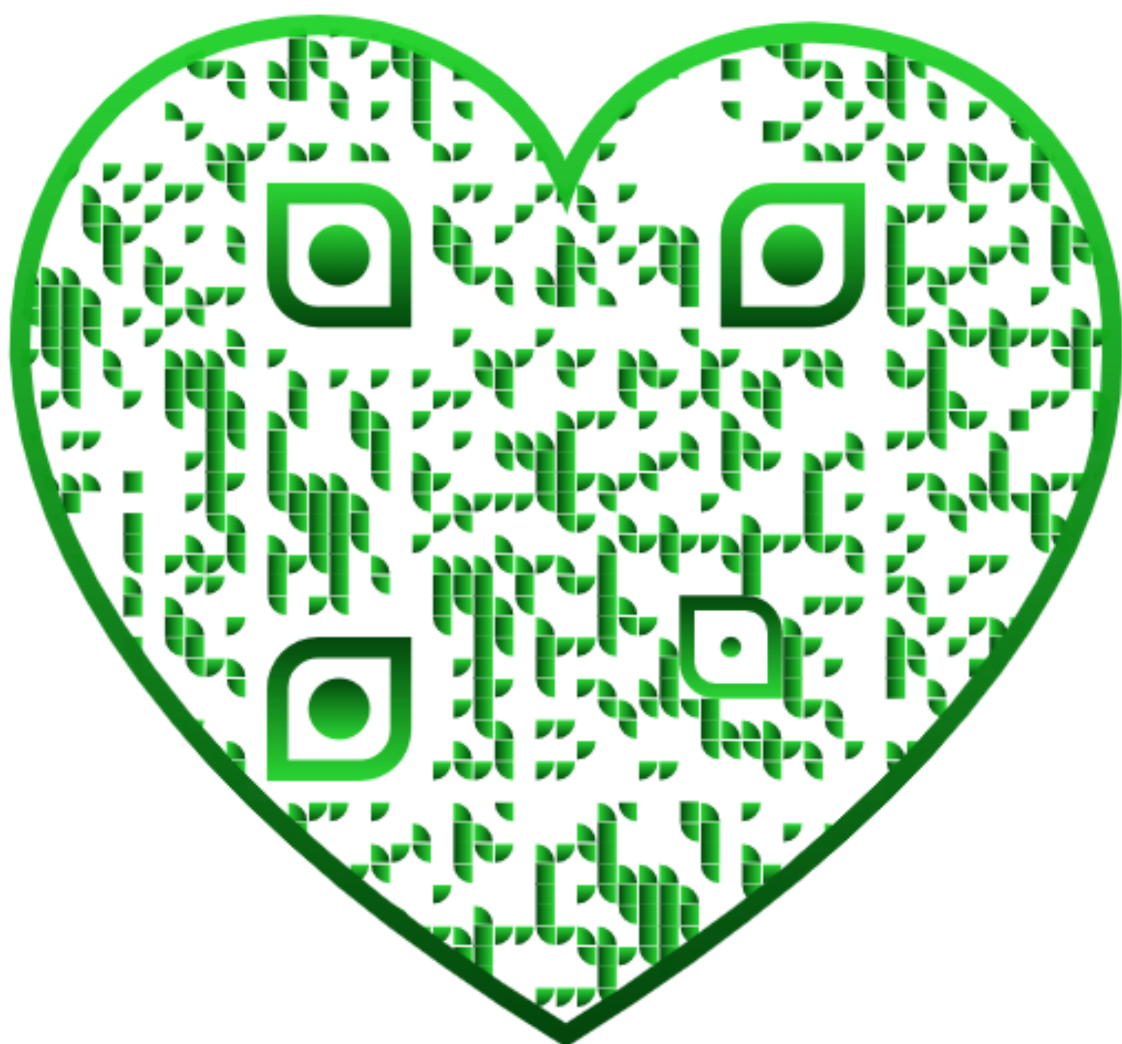
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A line up of Camel Trophy vehicles at the 45th anniversary event John Carroll

THE GOLDEN YEARS

DECEMBER 2025

It has been 45 years since the Camel Trophy first carved its way across the Trans-Amazonica Highway in 1980. While the inaugural run featured Jeeps, the event quickly found its true partner in Land Rover, cementing a partnership that birthed a legend.

For those of us who grew up during the 1980s and 90s, the sight of mud-caked, Sandglow Yellow Defenders or Discoverys was a call to action. It was the 'Olympics of 4x4' and defined what true adventure meant.

The Trophy wasn't just a race; it was a test of human spirit and mechanical resilience. From the unforgiving jungles of Borneo to the frozen wastes of Tierra del Fuego, every Land Rover and its crew were pushed to the limit.

The event embodied the true spirit of exploration. Teams weren't just driving, they were winching, building bridges, taking part in endurance activities and navigating where no vehicle had gone before.

For young enthusiasts like me, the Camel Trophy was a window to a world of possibilities. It taught us that the toughest tracks weren't found on a pre-planned route, but beyond the map's edge.

Seeing teams reach the finish line in battered but unbowed Land Rovers undoubtedly went a long way to influencing our relationship with vehicles from early on. I didn't just want a Land Rover, I wanted the freedom it represented.

'The Camel Trophy was a window to a world of possibilities'

A Land Rover was not merely a vehicle for transport; it was a rugged, capable, and durable lifestyle choice that offered everything a conventional family car did, along with the ability to tackle any terrain or adventure.

As we celebrate the 45th anniversary of the Camel Trophy, that spirit endures in just about every classic featured in this magazine. The yellow paint might have faded, but the memories remain. And who better to report on the 45th anniversary event for us than editor-at-large John Carroll, who covered the 1991 Trophy in Tanzania and Burundi. You can read his excellent feature on pages 42-49.

Andrew Stone

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ANDREW STONE

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CLASSIC LAND ROVER

ISSUE 151 DECEMBER 2025

LAND ROVERS

06 NO OVERLAND LIGHTWEIGHT

Ex-British Army vehicle finds new home in the US

31 A GATHERING IN THE HILLS

Clare Westbrook reports on the Stretton Hills show

32 FIRST OVERLAND REMEMBERED

More than 200 Land Rover owners mark famous journey

34 GOODBYE FROM ME

Kate Russell finally bids farewell to her Series IIA camper

42 THE WORLD'S GREATEST ADVENTURE

Join Carroll joins in celebrations for the 45th anniversary of the Camel Trophy

52 BLUETIFUL

Fran Baburic tackled a near-impossible Series IIA rebuild

64 TENTH ANNIVERSARY TRIAL

The Patina National RTV reached a milestone this year

70 A EUROPEAN CHALLENGE

Friends Tom Benson and Barney Netherwood take on the 4D Challenge

76 EX-MILITARY WORKHORSE

Former British Army 110 vehicle enjoys second life

TECH AND TOOLBOX

80 TOPPING OUT CEREMONY

Emrys Kirby turns his attention to the shell fixtures and fittings on our G-WAC

82 GEARING UP

Emrys Kirby builds up a gearbox and checks over the propshafts

TRAVEL

36 INTO THE MOUNTAINS

Toby Savage continues on his Trans Morocco Trail adventure driving his Carawagon

58 THE TROSSACHS TRAIL

Craig Allen tours the Loch Lomond and Trossachs national park

86 TRAVELS WITH JEMIMA

Exploring South America in a Series IIA during the 1960s

REGULARS

12 NEWS AND LETTERS

Land Rover news and views

19 BEHIND THE WHEEL

Hit or miss?

21 CLASSIC KIT

Hot stuff

25 OUR LAND ROVERS

A dirty weekend; 127 ambulance update

28 ROVERPHILE

James Taylor on more Land Rover rarities and gems

92 PRODUCT REVIEWS

Colman Pro cooler and Campingaz Kitchen 2

94 CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE

Gadgets, gear and gifts for enthusiasts

98 LOOKING BACK

A Lucky Break



70

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32



36



42



86



06

COVER PHOTO JOHN CARROLL

NO OVERLAND LIGHTWEIGHT



Tash has owned Pokey for 21 years and has recently had it fully restored and upgraded

Tash Elwyn from Florida in the US has dreams of driving his ex-British Army Lightweight across South Africa

WORDS LUCY RABONE PICTURES TASH ELWYN

US resident Tash Elwyn has owned Pokey, a 1980 Lightweight Series III, for 21 years, but it was only in 2017 that he took the first step towards transforming it into the overlanding machine it is today.

Tash said that while Land Rovers had always been a passion, this was his first 'classic'. "I've previously owned a Discovery 2 and two Range Rover Sports, but hankered for a while after a classic Land Rover," he explained. "The more I searched, the more I realised that what I really wanted was a Lightweight, with the distinctive body style."

Lightweights are not common in the US, and so Tash's search went on for quite a while: that is, until he found the right one in 2004.

He said: "I was living at Lookout Mountain, Georgia, when I found a Lightweight for sale that was just a few hours away. It was in good, original condition, drove well and needed zero work and had only done 7,000 miles.

"The seller was an Englishman who had served in the British Army and always had a love of Lightweights.

"He had fond memories of driving



"What do we do now—Staff?" Pte 'Foxy' Fox tries changing a wheel during the Regimental Patrol Competition

A friend found a photo of 50 HG 54 in service



‘No stone has been left unturned in terms of camping and off-roading essentials’

Pokey on Fernandina Beach, Amelia Island

them during his service and had imported the vehicle to the US. I was not only fortunate to become the next owner, but also to become friends with him.”

From the military reg, 50 HG 54, and the B card history, Tash has learnt that the Lightweight, nicknamed Pokey, was delivered to Central Vehicle Depot,

Hilton outside Derby and then served with 30 Signals in the Territorial Army.

When the MoD sold the Lightweight at auction in the late 1990s, it was purchased by a police officer who owned it until it was exported to the US.

From taking ownership of it in 2004 until 2012, Tash used Pokey as a fun

weekend vehicle, taking his kids, Sophie and Johnny, to football and gymnastics practice, going for ice creams and occasionally on fishing trips.

The kids loved it, and it was named Pokey by Sophie when she was just four years old due to its sluggish attempt at climbing the long, winding incline to their home.

But in 2012, Tash took on significant new responsibilities in his career and had to give up his Land Rover tinkering time. Sadly, the once well-running Lightweight fell into disrepair as rust and flaking paint ran riot.

He said: “At rock bottom, it had developed massive rust issues with the upper bulkhead, windscreen frame, the floor and side panels. I even had a family of invasive Cuban tree frogs living under the front seat cushions!”

Tash decided enough was enough, and in 2017, took the plunge and had the Lightweight dropped off at Realistic Restorations in St Petersburg, Florida, for a complete “no expense spared” resto-mod.

The plan over the coming years was to not only bring Pokey back to its former glory, but to take it to the next level, as Tash had dreams of travelling across the world in it. »



Tash has had all the work done by Realistic Restorations, St Petersburg

LIGHTWEIGHT



The original engine was converted to a 300Tdi using a Steve Parkers Ltd conversion kit

Pokey has been fully resprayed, note the Gulf War chevron

“It was all done in the spirit of trying to keep it as original as possible in appearance, while upgrading each component to make it reliable and versatile enough to one day do an overlanding trip across South Africa,” said Tash.

“I plan to ship it in a container from Florida to Cape Town. Then I’ll take a month off work to drive Pokey around and across South Africa (and possibly Namibia), where I’ll camp, fly fish, and rock climb my way around the region.

“I first visited the country in 2001 for a safari and knew that I wanted to go back and explore in a Land Rover one day.”

Tash described the planning and restoration of Pokey as “fluid” with new ideas emerging as the project went along, leading to it taking longer than expected.

‘The interior has been upgraded where possible, though still staying true to the character’

“I think I reached ‘the end of the internet’ as the saying goes, in terms of my quest to find the best possible Land Rover upgrades and enhancements,” he said.

“The guys at Realistic Restorations worked with me every step of the way and never batted an eye when I repeatedly asked ‘What if...?’”

Pokey’s original engine was a 2,286cc petrol four cylinder, which was soon

converted to a 300Tdi (using a Steve Parkers Ltd conversion kit) to give it a bit of welly.

Tash has even made a new Land Rover badge for the back, giving a nod to the new, improved engine power. The increased engine size has left little spare room under the bonnet, and so the windscreen washer fluid reservoir has had to be put in the antenna box.

Range Rover P38 power steering and Defender disc brakes from Forbyn Bros were fitted, and the axles were upgraded to heavy-duty versions on both the front and rear.

ARB air lockers were added, along with an ARB dual air compressor for adjusting tyre pressures. The vehicle has been shod with Michelin XZL tyres as it had these



Buttermilk the border collie loves riding shotgun



Buttermilk approves of the new tyre pressure stencils



Pokey has been restored and upgraded over five years



When the interior was a work in progress. Note the Rhino Liner textured paint



It has been a complete body-off restoration

during its MoD service.

With Tash's overlanding dream in mind, storage was a vital part of the picture, and so lockers were fitted in the rear and in the seat bases.

An aftermarket air conditioning unit has also been fitted. "The air con unit was fitted with custom fibreglass demister vents, which have allowed me to keep the dashboard mostly original," said Tash.

Other 21st-century upgrades include a replica Smiths heater and Alpine Apple CarPlay head unit for navigation and entertainment. Alpine HD cameras have been fitted for a clearer rear view and just below the bonnet to see the terrain when driving off-road.

Exterior lights have been upgraded to modern LEDs, and the new Front Runner roof rack has a solar panel and Starlink satellite dish (modified to run on 12V, with a Wi-Fi router), and an off-road version of a weBoost 5G cell booster antenna.

But the military history hasn't been forgotten. When the new side doors were fitted, Tash had the original Gulf War chevron painted back on. "Pokey has been repainted in Limestone. It was the closest match we could find to the sand colour it was painted in by the MoD for the 1990 Gulf War in Iraq," said Tash.

He added: "Underneath the original sand colour, we found a teal layer which was thought to have been for some sort of UN duty, though the B card doesn't back this theory up.

"All Allied vehicles in the Gulf War bore the chevron as an insignia to identify the Allied coalition in service.

"While Pokey was painted for the Gulf War, it seems that the conflict ended so quickly that it never actually made it to Iraq.

"But we repainted the chevron to honour its heritage. While we also redid the tyre pressure stencils in the military style," explained Tash.

No stone has been left unturned in terms of camping and off-roading essentials.



Pokey was in a bad state at the start of the restoration



Defender windows from Masai 4x4 have been fitted

To list a few, Tash has had the following fitted: a custom steering guard and fuel tank skid plates, a snorkel, Old Man Emu shocks, Rocky Mountain parabolic springs, differential guards, a Fairey Overdrive, and a Warn winch with a synthetic winch line and Factor 55 ultra hook. He's even had a Lev-o-Gage inclinometer installed in

front of the steering wheel and above the driver's door.

Defender windows from Masai 4x4, which offer enhanced security and several other benefits over standard Defender windows, ensure Pokey will be able to handle whatever the South African terrain throws at it. »



Brakes have been converted to Defender disc brakes with a kit from Forbyn Bros

LIGHTWEIGHT

Other extras fitted include an AluCab 270° awning, alongside Maxtrax sand ladders, a National Luna dual battery monitor, two battery terminals in the passenger footwell for easy jumping/charging, and under-bonnet lights for nighttime repairs.

Tash had two 10-gallon fuel tanks custom-made to go under the front seats (tied together to an external filler), and a third eight-gallon fuel tank under the rear tub, with a clever switch sited under the front seat to change between front and rear tanks.

The interior has been upgraded where possible, though still staying true to the character.

Tash said: “From the knees down, it’s all sprayed with Rhino Liner textured paint for durability. I’ve got Exmoor seats upfront with seat warmers, with Exmoor forward-facing tip-up seats in the rear, and an Exmoor centre cubby.”

To match the Lightweight, Tash has also had a 1967 US Army M416 trailer restored. “It’s been converted for overlanding with solar power, dual battery setup, National Luna fridge/freezer, tankless propane water heater, shower, a fresh water tank and much more,” he explained.

Now that Pokey is complete, Tash is proud that it still has the original frame and body. He recalled the day he drove it home from Realistic

Restorations:



Warn winch with synthetic winch line and a Factor 55 ultra hook

“The gap between the door panels and the windscreen was leaking in the rain, and I knew in that moment I still had a proper Land Rover and hadn’t overdone it with my resto-mod.

“I’ve taken it to a few local car shows in Florida since the work was completed, but it’s no museum queen. I’m OK with Pokey developing some new scars and patina, and I plan to use it for camping and overlanding here in the US before the big bucket list adventure to South Africa.”



The 300Tdi badge Tash made

We’ll be keeping an eye on Tash’s Instagram page devoted to Pokey: @pokeythelandroverlightweight for updates. CLR



Pokey has been fully resprayed in Limestone. Here it is partnered with the trailer



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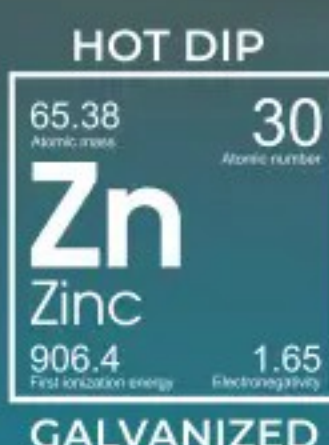


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Inaugural Defender Awards shortlist revealed

Defender has revealed the 56 international projects that are in with a chance of winning an inaugural Defender Award—a global initiative launched to recognise and reward local conservation and humanitarian heroes.

The diverse shortlist includes initiatives from disaster relief and species protection to raising awareness of skin cancer and tackling poverty and violence.

It includes entries from seven countries across four categories: Defenders of the Land, Sea, Wild and Humanity.

The judging panel is led by Defender managing director, Mark Cameron, and conservation biologist, Dr Moreangels Mbizah.

Winning entries will receive a Defender vehicle, £100,000 bursary and expert mentorship – with the seven overall winners set to be announced later this year.

There are two UK entrants in each of the four categories.

The Thousand Year Trust and Youngwilders CIC are on the Defenders of the Land shortlist; Shepreth Wildlife Conservation Charity and Restoring Upland Nature are in the running for Defenders of the Wild; Suicide Prevention UK and North East Wales Search and Rescue are on the Defenders of Humanity shortlist, and Sussex Dolphin Project and Women in Ocean Science Charity are on Defenders of the Sea.

Mark Cameron said: The calibre of the entries is phenomenal and the variety of projects on the shortlist is a testament to the pioneering work being done by local conservation and humanitarian heroes around the world.”

To see all 56 shortlisted projects, visit: landrover.com/defender-awards -The seven winning entries will be revealed later this year.



It's all muddy good fun

Advance tickets are now available for the Castlewood 4x4 and Overlander Show 2026, which takes place at the Cheshire Showground, Knutsford, on Saturday, May 9 and Sunday, May 10, 2026.

Expect epic off-roading action, explore a wealth of trade stalls and food vendors, visit displays and demonstrations from experts

and 4x4 club stands, and enjoy a jam-packed weekend of family entertainment.

Tickets will be available at the gate, but you'll save quite a bit if you buy them in advance.

Visit for the day or make a weekend of it with friends and family at the superb facilities Cheshire Showground has to offer.

More details at <https://castlewood4x4.co.uk/>



The only way to travel

When CLR contributor Matt Whitehall's son got married earlier this year, at Coventry's medieval register office, there was no question about what the wedding cars would be.

Callum is as much of a Land Rover fan as his dad, and in all, six Land Rovers took part in one way or another.

Callum's 110, driven by the

best man, took him and the groomsmen to the ceremony and was then used to transport Callum and his new bride, Lish, to the reception.

Lloyd Yeo's Series II was used to take Lish to the ceremony; a Td5 110 CSW owned by Callum's mum, Lindsay, transported the bridesmaids; and Matt's

Tdi 90, Colin Campbell's V8 Ninety and Mark Holland's TD5 Ninety challenge truck were all used for general transport throughout the day.

They are pictured here outside the reception, which was held at the Greyhound pub at Sutton Stop on the Coventry Canal.



Epic 1950s journey in Mzuri

Land Rover restoration specialist, Portugal-based CoolInvintage has commissioned a sumptuous book detailing the epic 1950s Trans-Africa expedition George and Jinx Rodger made in VAC 433, a Series One Land Rover they named Mzuri.

George Rodger (1908-1995) was a British photojournalist who, after working as a war correspondent for LIFE magazine during World War Two, co-founded Magnum Photos in 1947 alongside heavyweights Henri Cartier-Bresson,

Robert Capa and David 'Chim' Seymour.

His wife, Lois 'Jinx' Rodger (1925-2023), was a respected photo editor and teacher.

The book, priced at €155, is available to pre-order via CoolInvintage's website.

It is Swiss-bound and comes in an open-ended slip case. Of the 192 pages, 168 are image pages and 24 are text-based.

More details and how to pre-order are available on the CoolInvintage website www.coolinvintage.com



Bag a bargain (or two)

Seven lovely-looking Land Rovers will be going under the hammer on Saturday, November 8, at the Iconic Collectors' Car Sale at the NEC, Birmingham.

The oldest is a sympathetically restored 1951 Series One 80in - the result of one enthusiast's mission to rebuild it as close as possible to the way it would have been when new. It is offered with a guide price of £20,000 to £25,000.

There are a couple of other Series Ones at opposite ends of the price spectrum.

One is a 1954 86in which has been owned by automotive expert Harry Metcalfe since 2014.

It was one of the first cars to appear on the YouTube channel, Harry's Garage,

where it remains a fan favourite with close to 500,000 views. It has an estimated value of £10,000 to £12,000.



The other is a 1956 86in with a full canvas tilt and a hardtop. The current owner bought it in 2012, and it was entrusted to Harwoods Land Rover for a complete restoration around 10 years ago. It can be yours for £25,000 to £30,000.

Also in the sale is a 1958 Series II (£20,000-£25,000); two Defender 90s and a very interesting 2008 Defender 110 'Taipan'.

This flexible strike vehicle was prepared for the Paraguayan Army in full military specification with replica weaponry.

Said to be in remarkably original condition, it runs and drives well and is UK-registered. It is perfect for a collector of military vehicles, and one you are unlikely to see another of at rallies.



The Series II with its caravan after fording a flooded creek

An unlikely pairing

Thomas Brownlie's tale about crossing the Simpson Desert had me thinking back to my doing the Birdsville Track in 1978. The story was published in CLR issue 5.

I hitched a ride with a chap who had a Series II and a caravan, and another Aussie who was driving a Morris Minor, of all vehicles.

Like Thomas, we were hindered by wet weather.

Rivers were higher than expected, and mile upon mile of the track was underwater. We just had to hope it was only a few inches deep, and plough on.

On one occasion, the Morris was pushed out of a flooded creek by the Series II towing the caravan: the Morris's dynamo hadn't functioned since Birdsville. So its battery had to go into the Land-Rover every so many miles to be charged up.

A year later, I was tackling the dirt roads of the Outback in a Morris 1800.

Just as unlikely a vehicle as the Minor. A failed suspension bush meant I had to turn a rear wheel round to stop the tyre rubbing itself away on the bodywork.

But all three vehicles from the English Midlands got through.

Eric Hayman

Desert Visit

It was a great pleasure to drop in on Garage Iriki in Zagora, Morocco, last month. The proprietor, Aziz, was not there on this occasion, as he was away doing back-up on the Rallye du Maroc in the white 110 we featured in the magazine last year.

However, his two social media guys, Hassan on the left and Zakaria on the right, were there, along with mechanic Ismael in the centre of this picture. They were thrilled to see themselves in print.

I have featured their excellent skills in at least two editions of Classic Land Rover, and on the table in the workshop sits a very dog-eared copy of a past issue.

This will now be supplemented by these two new ones. Classic Land Rover magazine has proved to be very popular with the many visitors who call in to get their trucks and bikes fixed.

It is reassuring to see that quite a few leaf-sprung series Land Rovers are still being used for Moroccan adventures and have usually come from mainland Europe.

Toby Savage





Colin & Tamara

How green laning became one couple's lifeline

Northamptonshire couple, Colin and Tamara, loved hiking and being outdoors, but struggled to keep up their hobbies due to chronic health issues.

Colin, 52, lives with fibromyalgia and experiences widespread pain and extreme fatigue, and Tamara, 36, slipped a disc and was later diagnosed with osteoarthritis and permanent nerve damage.

What could have been a permanent retreat from the outdoors instead became a new beginning, thanks to the discovery of green laning.

The couple have been able to manage the frustrations of their conditions, meet new people, and get back out into the countryside once more.

"At first, I couldn't see much happiness in my future. Whenever I tried to look ahead, all I could see was that I was limited because of my physical health," said Tamara.

"Having something to look forward to is important for your mental health and wellbeing," she added.

Colin has taken his passion further, volunteering as the Green

Lane Association's Area Rep for Northamptonshire. In this role, he helps to keep lanes open, welcomes new members and liaises with organisations such as the police and local authorities.

Lancaster Insurance has partnered with the Green Lane Association to raise awareness of the important work they do.

Spokeswoman Yvonne Gosney said: "Colin and Tamara's story shows just some of the benefits that exploring the great outdoors can have, and the joys that green laning can bring to everyone."



Behind the Headlines

A former journalist turned Austin Rover PR executive has written a book about his life and career.

In *Stories Behind the Headlines*, published in September, the Warwick-based author discusses the stories he covered in his time on the Cambridge Evening News and Coventry Evening Telegraph.

But it is his time with Austin Rover that is of particular relevance to CLR readers.

When Colin Walkey moved into public relations with Austin Rover, he was heavily involved in strikes at Longbridge and other factories. These events routinely made the front pages of national newspapers.

"The stories behind the strikes, which were never published, were much more interesting," said Colin, who also played a key role in the battle to prevent Ford from taking

over Austin Rover.

Colin was promoted to the board of Land Rover Group in 1987, and, over the next decade, he was part of a management team that doubled Land Rover's sales around the world.

He was responsible for the worldwide press launches of the Land Rover Discovery in 1989 and the new Range Rover in 1994.

His book reveals the background to the takeovers by British Aerospace and BMW.

And he tells how he created a Land Rover adventure for journalists to follow the trail of a momentous trek that Hannibal (and his elephants) made across the Alps 2,000 years ago.

Stories Behind the Headlines, priced at £9.95, is available direct from Colin's website, www.colinwalkey.co.uk or via email at colinwalkey0@gmail.com

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The Admiral

Following its public debut at Concours of Elegance 2025 at Hampton Court Palace, this 1976 Series III kicks off the launch of the Kent Heritage Works Ltd 1-of-1 Collection.

It has been named The Admiral due to its rare, 1960s paint colour, Admiralty Blue, which was used for VIP cars by the Royal Navy.

The vehicle has been meticulously restored and equipped with a range of added features to make it a usable, everyday classic.

Kent Heritage Works founder Cliff Smith said: "We have worked with our in-house team and some of the UK's best artisan companies in the historic engineering and Land Rover industry.

"We started with V8 Developments, which has delivered our incredible Dark Edition engine, a highly tuned and honed Rover 3.5L V8.

"This heritage engine not only delivers a huge amount of torque but also allows us to stay as close to the brand, from a historic perspective, as possible.

"We have then improved the brakes, suspension, steering,

heating systems, added a ZF automatic gearbox, upgraded the differentials, prop shafts, etc, as well as custom LED lighting, interior lighting and an in-house designed touch screen for CarPlay, Android Play and control of several key functions such as the heated seats, heated windscreen and heated door mirror."

It also has an inbuilt fridge from a Range Rover Sport and a 320W custom Focal sound system.

The Admiral is priced at £180,000 + VAT.



Green lane closed

The Green Lane Association has reported that the permissive route linking the upper Claerwen byway to the Teifi Pools area, in Powys, Wales, will be closed for the whole of November.

During this time, requests to use the route will be declined and the gates will remain closed.

SUVs to pay more to park

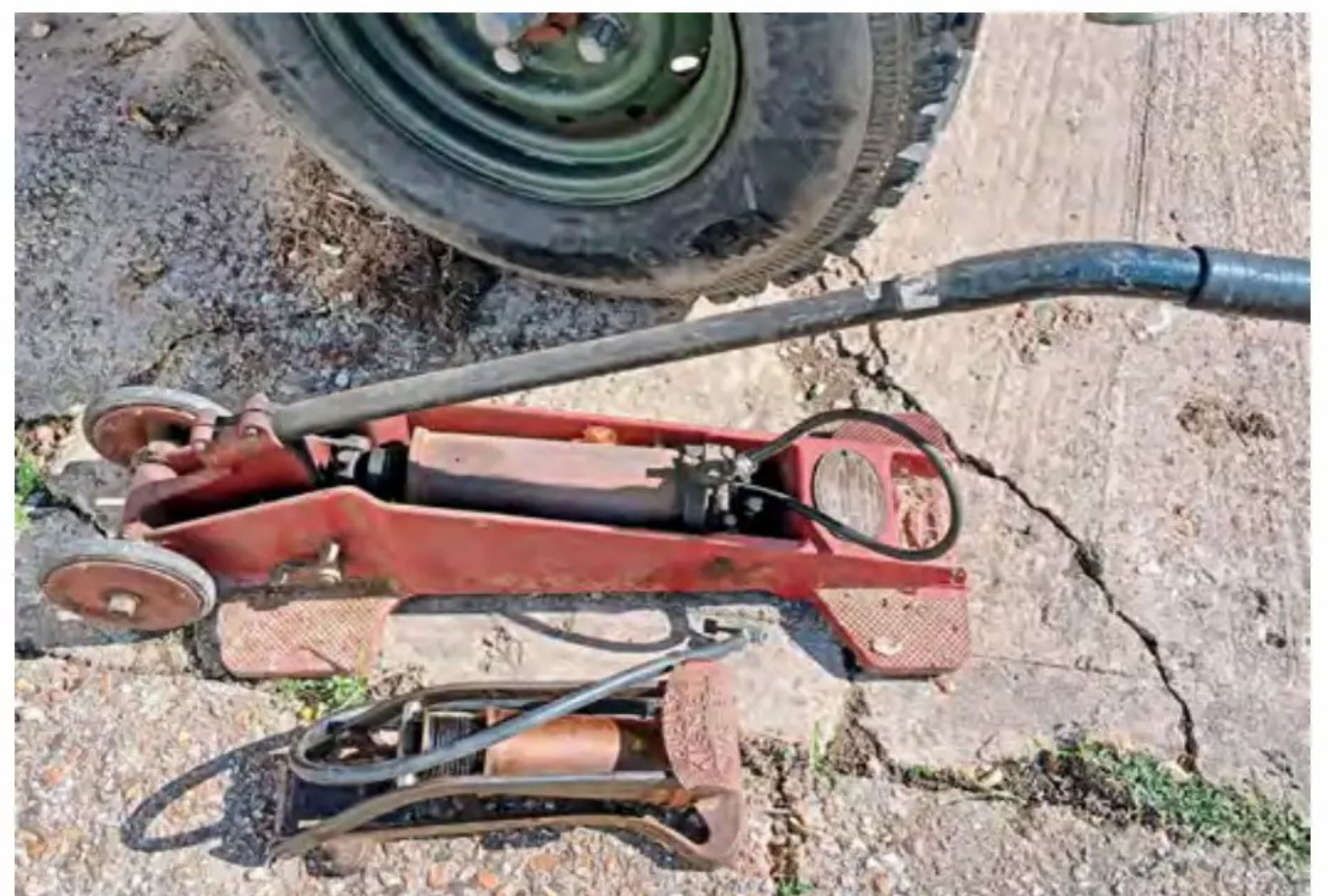
An item on the BBC website caught the attention of CLR contributor Lucy Rabone.

It reported that Cardiff council's cabinet has passed a motion that motorists who drive sports utility vehicles (SUVs) or other large vehicles are set to be charged more to park in the city.

Cardiff will be split into three new zones, with resident permits in the city centre scrapped and students entitled to fewer permits.

Drivers with cars weighing more than 2,400kg - SUVs - will pay more for a permit, and those with cars weighing more than 3,500kg will not be eligible.

Drivers of diesel cars would also have to pay a surcharge to encourage them to switch to less polluting vehicles.



Pump it Up

These are my contributions to Classic Kit. In the background is a Kismet Trolley Compressor, which I bought in a job lot for £3 in a local auction at least 30 years ago.

All it needed to return it to working order was a new airline. It has a pressure gauge take-off and oil cups for the moving parts. It's double-barreled with one barrel inside the other.

Fast forward to the 2020s, and I bought the footpump in the foreground. It's a Kismet Duplex Master, which I found on a site, Vintage Pumps UK, run by Gordon Edwards.

He refurbishes these pumps, and the footpump has been refurbished by him. It was expensive, but it and the trolley compressor are very well engineered.

The footpump is also double-barreled with one inside the

other. Both are made by William Turner of Sheffield when British engineering was the world leader, and both are very heavy.

The trolley compressor is almost certainly post-war, but the footpump could be pre-war.

Anyway, they're both coming up to at least 80 years old and still work far more efficiently than any modern footpump.

They're capable of topping up the 7.50s on my Series III, and it's good exercise, and for car tyres they're very quick as my neighbour discovered when he used the footpump to top up a tyre on his Golf.

An occasional drop of neatsfoot oil keeps the leather washers in fine fettle. Gordon Edwards sent me a parts list for the trolley compressor, and virtually everything is available.

Vic Butler, Andover, Hants

Please send in your news, views and letters for inclusion on these pages.

It may be a show you're organising, a special Land Rover you own or know of, a product you've developed or anything else you think may be of interest to our readers. Please email news@classiclandrover.com



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ENGINES



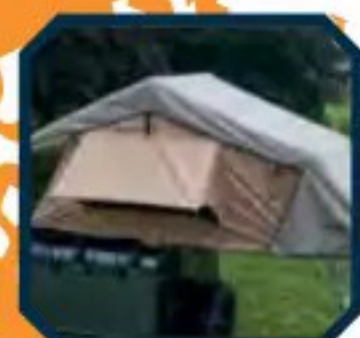
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HIT OR MISS?

The Ineos Grenadier was pitched as the spiritual successor to the Land Rover Defender but how is it actually performing in the marketplace?

WORDS **CRAIG ALLEN** ILLUSTRATION **LOUISE LIMB**

After an incredibly short gestation period for a new vehicle, the Grenadier was launched in 2022 with the intention of continuing the legacy of the iconic Defender. However, has it truly succeeded?

There have been numerous reports of unsold Grenadiers and dealer franchises shutting down across the country.

Ineos said: “We are dramatically reducing the size of the UK network as part of a strategic overhaul aimed at strengthening after-sales support and preparing for long-term growth”.

While this sounds reasonable, it raises the question: would you shrink the dealer network if you had a sales success on your hands? So, what’s really going on? Does this imply that the rugged 4x4 has been a flop? As is often the case, the reality is more complicated.

Despite a great backstory of being conceived over a pint in a London pub, any new model from an unfamiliar company fresh to market was going to face challenges.

Buyers of off-road vehicles tend to be a conservative bunch and are remarkably brand loyal. On the face of it, expecting this love-child of a G-Wagon and Defender to gain immediate acceptance was ambitious.

Having said that, Ineos had an advantage up its sleeve in the recent demise of the original Defender. This left a gap in the market for a back-to-basics 4x4, which the Grenadier was originally pitched to fill.

Meanwhile, with old-school, solid axle, body-on-frame off-landers becoming an increasingly rare breed, there were plenty of potential markets, especially in Australia and North America.

Ineos was very canny in building up a fan base from the outset with the steady release of YouTube videos covering development and testing of the new vehicle.

The company also seemed refreshingly open to user input, something that had been conspicuously absent with the new Defender. However, despite all these good vibes, a change of direction crept in during development that strayed away from the

‘I think it’s safe to say that reaction to the Grenadier from new owners has been mixed’

concept of a hardcore 4x4.

Recaro Seats, fancy infotainment systems and electronic bells and whistles all served to up the price. Then there was the Rolls-Royce approach to the suspension and running gear, which made it over-engineered for the average user.

All of this meant that what had originally been conceived as a £40,000 vehicle for farmers and utility companies was now a £70,000 high-end machine. So rather than an alternative to an old-style Defender, it was now actually competing with the new one.

I think it’s safe to say that the reaction to the Grenadier from new owners has been mixed, ranging from outright enthusiasm to disappointment.

I have followed the story of this new 4x4 closely and have driven it. Many owners have waxed lyrical about their Grenadiers,

and it has earned praise from 4x4 gurus Ronnie Dahl and Andrew St Pierre White.

However, while still enjoying their Grenadiers, some owners have become frustrated with poor after-sales service and long waits for parts. A friend has just sold his Grenadier as it had too many niggly faults.

So, what are we to make of all this? The first thing to say is that it is not a bad vehicle.

Our editor-at-large, John Carroll, recently drove one off-road and was suitably impressed. It is, however, a niche machine but not the one vacated by the original Defender.

That was an ‘everyman 4x4’, affordable and good enough for most people right out of the box. It could then be specced up, which is why they’re still popular today. The Grenadier, by contrast, is a high-end machine that will appeal to a much smaller market sector.

While the Grenadier may not replace the Defender, Ineos deserves commendation for bringing this rugged 4x4 to market. How it will fare in the long term remains to be seen, and I would be interested to hear what the readers think. **CLR**



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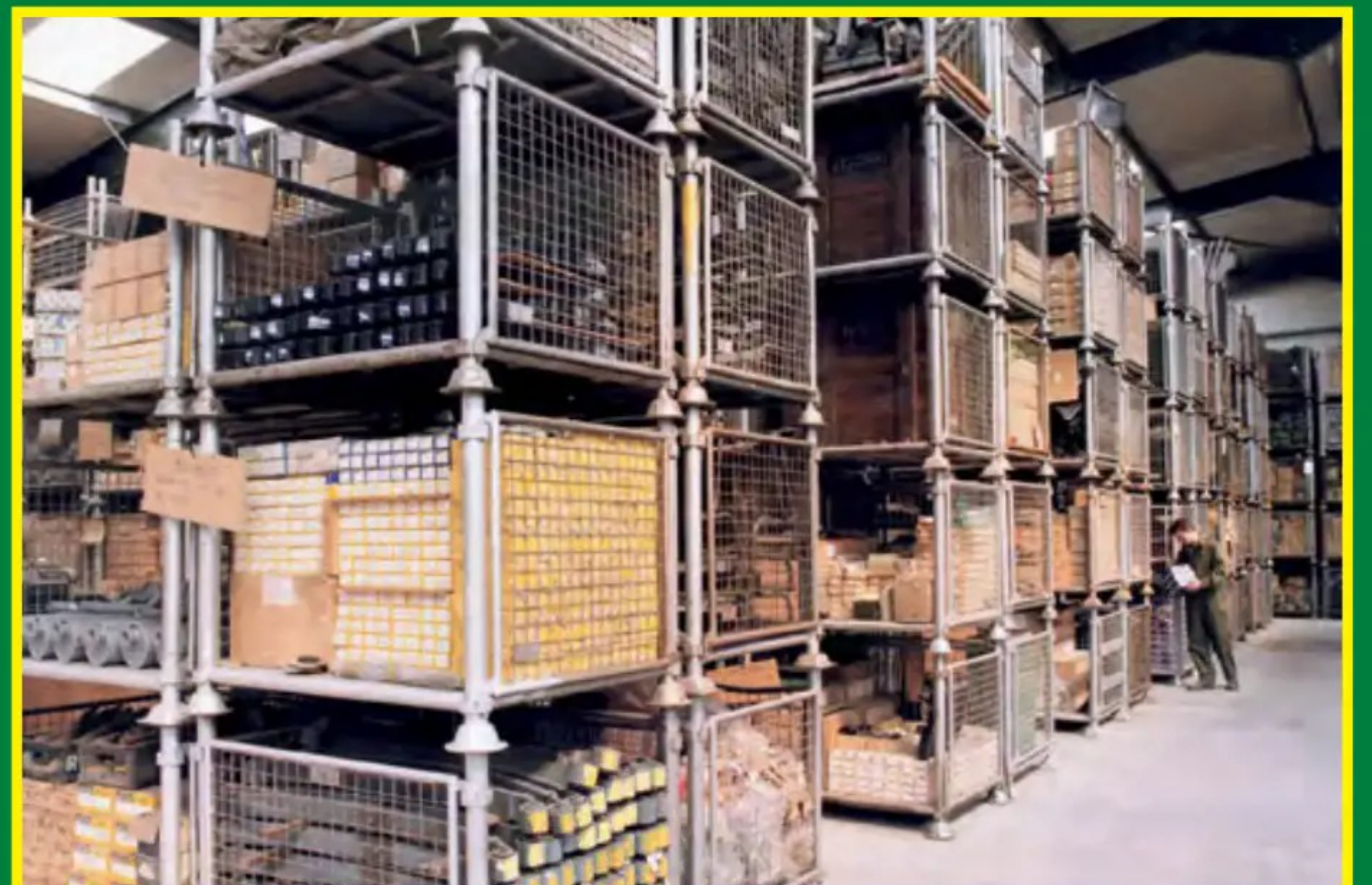
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HOT STUFF

Craig Allen adds another camping stove to his already impressive list of kit

WORDS AND PICTURES **CRAIG ALLEN**

I have more camping stoves than I need. They range from my old Campingaz Bleuett to a few Trangias and several others in between. Despite this, I am always on the lookout for gear for my Land Rover adventures, which is why I recently picked up the cassette-style stove pictured here. I was attracted by its ability to collapse into the compartment which houses the gas cannister, making for a compact package to stow away in the back of the vehicle.

These stoves are available under various trade names, although they are doubtless all made in the same factory in China.

Mine was under the Odoland brand and was towards the more expensive price bracket at £60. This was not an insubstantial layout of cash, but I got what appears to be a well-made stove, which came with its own tailor-made neoprene storage bag.

But the real test would be to see how it

‘The real test would be to see how it performed ‘in the field’



Craig managed to rapidly boil a kettle on his first test of the stove



The stove stows neatly away in its cannister holder for storage



Its compact size means it doesn't take up a lot of room in the back of the Land Rover

performed ‘in the field’. A road trip to South Queensferry and the Forth bridges over a bank holiday weekend gave me the ideal opportunity to find out.

Parking the Defender beside a rural farm track for a brew stop, I broke out the stove in the back of the vehicle. The set-up process couldn't be easier: you simply flip up the hatch on the canister compartment and fold out the three-legged pot stand and burner.

You then need to slot a gas cannister into the housing and turn on the stove via the twist switch.

The piezo-electric ignition immediately lit the burner, which was adjusted via the same main switch. After lighting the stove, I popped a kettle of water onto the trivet

stand and soon had a steady boil on the go. My first impression was that it was simple to use and delivered a good flame for either making brews or cooking.

It was also very stable, something that can be an issue with canister stoves, which can easily topple over once you put a pot on them.

The other advantage of the cassette stove is that it packs neatly away into its housing once you have finished, making for ease of storage.

I can see this stove becoming my go-to for camping and road trips going forward, and it has already earned a place in the back of the Land Rover.

They are available to buy on Amazon and other online sites with prices ranging from £35 to £65. [CLR](#)

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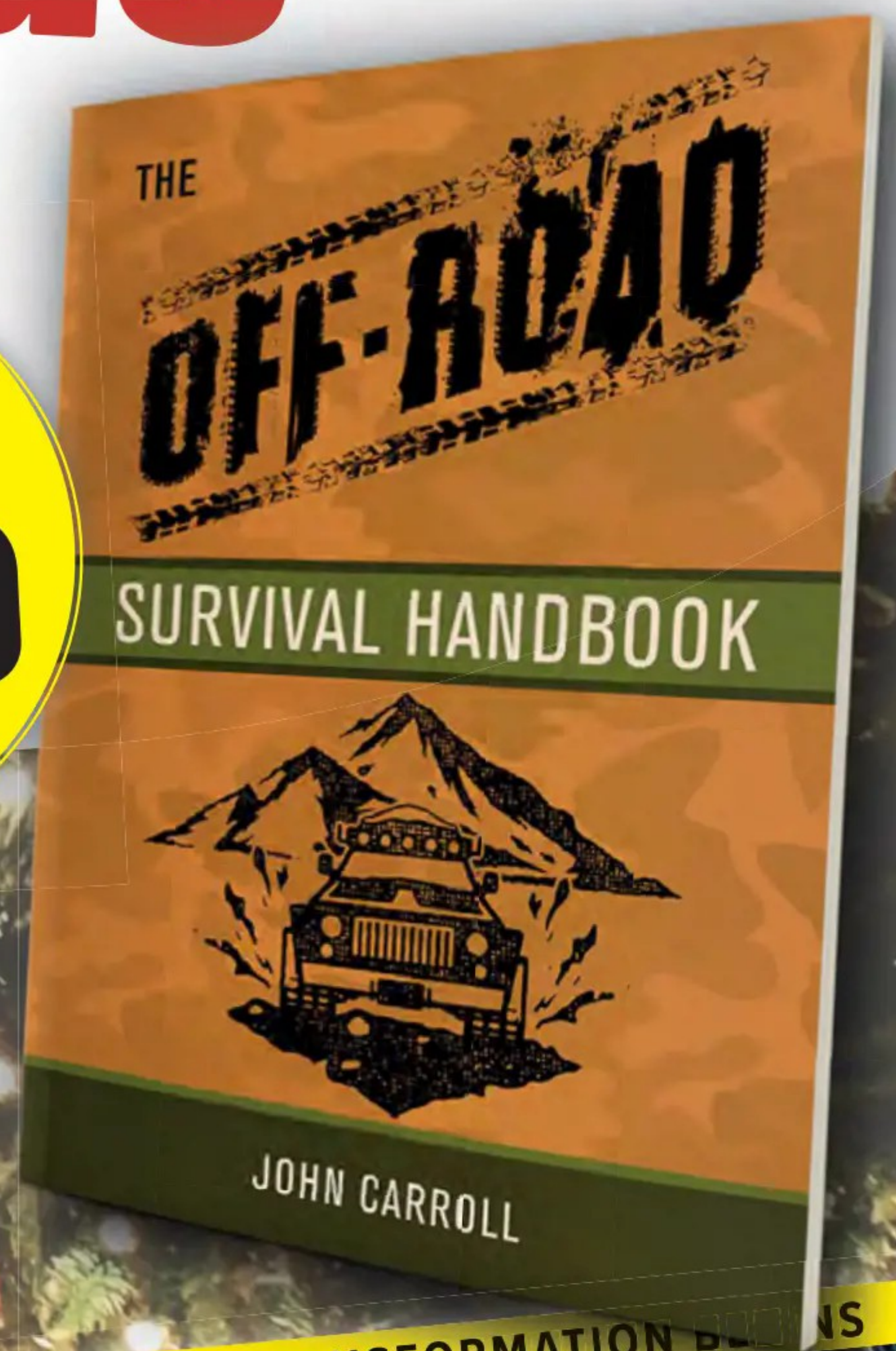
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A gathering at another mud hole, deciding where to go next to challenge vehicles and drivers Matt Whitehall



**MATT
WHITEHALL**

VEHICLE: DEFENDER 110

OWNED FOR: 3 YEARS

A DIRTY WEEKEND

A weekend of off roading proved to be the perfect stag do

WORDS AND PICTURES **MATT WHITEHALL**

After my son Callum had proposed to his now wife last August, it had always been a conversation starter as to where the stag was going to be held. It was inevitable that mud and Land Rovers would be involved somewhere, with Callum and his best man, Lee Harrison, involved in winching competitions.

Lee, having the reins on organising the weekend, opted for a trip to Frickley 4x4 Off-road Centre in West Yorkshire. The site is 75 acres of reclaimed slagheap with a fantastic mix of rocks, mud holes, water, steep climbs and woodland. It is a pay-and-play site, but Lee arranged for us to have it to ourselves for the full weekend, which was a bonus.

There were 13 of us across five Defenders, a modified Series III 88in, a Discovery 1, a Discovery 2, an L322 Range Rover, a classic V8 trialer and a Land Rover-based Ibex.

Two quads were also brought along for good measure. Some were only used as tow vehicles, others were built as winch



Saturday evening chill after food with Brandon, the fire starter Stuart Bingham

challenge trucks, and some were for green lanes, so they had a good mix of abilities.

We were gathered by 3pm on Friday, ready to go. The Discovery 1, which belonged to Callum, was being loaned to two of his friends who were new to the off-road world.

We forgot to tell them that the Discovery had only been on the road

for three days after having a head swap when the old one cracked.

We left Hinckley, made our way to the A46, then onto the A1, moving further up country at a steady 45 to 50mph as two vehicles were towing. We made a couple of stops to tighten a loose trailer board and for a coffee at services just outside Doncaster.

The sat nav then took us through the middle of Doncaster, which was interesting to say the least, as it was rush hour. We got separated for a while, but as all the vehicles were fitted with CBs we were soon together again and arrived on site just after 7pm, where we met three others from our party.

After setting up camp, we carried out a quick recce of the site, which looked promising. A fire was lit, and we settled down for food and a chat.

Saturday morning came, and after breakfast, the other members of the party arrived. It was intended to be a 'free for all', but due to there being three winch trucks, the inevitable happened, and challenges were made to see how far we could get through the rougher areas working as a loose team.

Callum's friends, using the Discovery 1, had never driven off-road before but quickly grew confident and took it in turns to tackle some of the rougher terrain with the safety net of the winch trucks and knowledge of the more experienced drivers always being at hand.

We did have one casualty – a Defender 90 winch truck lost three gears in the auto box, but battled on with just first and reverse. That was until more bad luck struck when the pinion bearing on his front diff collapsed, requiring a tow back to camp from the farthest point on the site.

Sunday morning brought mud from overnight rain, making things a little more interesting and different from the hard ground we had the day before, but again, great fun was had by all.

There were plenty of chances to get dirty in the mud and water. The rain, unfortunately, came in again during the day, so we decided to break camp.

We said our goodbyes and were on the road home at around 3pm, with a completely uneventful trip south.

It has already been agreed that we'll do it again, just for the experience and no stag is required. **CLR**

'Sunday morning brought mud from overnight rain, making things a little more interesting'



Stephen Bingham and his dad Stuart push through the mud after a night of rain Brandon Holland

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**KATE
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An idyllic camping spot on the Isle of Bute

IT NEVER RAINS...

Kate Russell treats her Pulse ambulance camper to a new canvas for the pop top

WORDS **KATE RUSSELL** PICTURES **KATE RUSSELL AND KIM WHORMSLEY**

I wrote a few months ago on these pages that I was done spending money on my Pulse-bodied 127 camper.

I knew that it was false hope; anyone with a Land Rover project knows that it continues to drain your finances until either you or it throws in the towel.

To be fair, some were needed while others were just nice to have and could have been done without.

On the to-do list was a new canopy for the pop top. Towards the end of the summer, we'd noticed a few damp patches near the roof and realised that the cotton had degraded to such an extent that water was coming in through the seams.

We contacted Drivelodge in Keighley, who we'd originally bought it from and arranged to have a replacement one made up - this time in a fetching shade of deep blue.

We also ordered a new set of gas struts for the pop top, as the addition of the extra solar panel on top made it a lot heavier, and we were worried the original ones would fail.

We were assured that swapping over the canopy was a relatively simple DIY job, so a weekend was set aside to complete it.

Another must was a leisure battery repair. It wouldn't hold its charge when not connected to the mains, and when we were off-grid, the levels plunged dramatically.

Luckily, it came with a five-year warranty, which still had a few months to run, so it is currently back with Roamer in Leeds, being assessed for repair. Best guess is a fault with the battery management system, but we'll see.

What we didn't necessarily need but has already proved useful is a fold away table

bolted to the outside of the camper. It's a perfect place to put an outside stove or as a shelf for a glass of wine.

We've used the camper a fair few times this year, although our first trip wasn't until June.

We started off in Shropshire, carried on to Wales and then the southern Lake District, visiting friends and old haunts along the way.

Also in June was the CLR contributors weekend at Fotherighay. The weather was glorious and we were able to swim in the river and enjoy a relaxing few days with our fellow writers, swapping ideas for future stories and catching up with old friends..

Another great weekend with like-minded souls was the Pulse Ambulance Facebook group get-together on Anglesey.

The owners of around 20 Pulses, other ambulances and various Land Rover campers gathered to tell stories of great adventures,

'We picked up plenty of ideas for our own conversion and now have a bucket list of possible adaptations'

show off their vehicles, or just sit about in the sun with a beer.

Every vehicle was different, and interiors ranged from the rudimentary to the really posh, with all sorts in between.

We picked up plenty of ideas for our own conversion and now have a bucket list of possible adaptations - some practical, others not so.

A couple of weeks later, it was our annual pilgrimage to Tribfest, the world's biggest tribute band festival. A group of us have taken the Pulse for the past five years, and the stewards on the gate are well used to seeing us and always give a friendly greeting.

Our final outing - for now - was a week in Northumberland and Scotland: Beandell Bay, Kielder, Ayr, Bute, Loch Lomond and Moffat. We managed to avoid commercial campsites for the entire week and didn't spend more than £12 a night to park up. And whether it was at the side of the shore, a loch or a river, we were able to walk the dogs nearby and all had a marvellous time.

We may get the Pulse out over the winter - there's no reason not to. We have on-board heating and all mod cons, after all. It might be nice to get away for a few days early in the new year when the roads are quiet. **CLR**



Tucked away in the trees at the side of Loch Lomond



Some of the 20 or so campers at the Pulse Ambulance Facebook group get together in Anglesey

JAMES TAYLOR'S ROVERPHILE



More archive gems and rarities from the world's leading Land Rover historian

WORDS AND PICTURES **JAMES TAYLOR**



This month, I'm discussing special edition Range Rovers, mine-protected Series IIIs and Carmichael fire tenders among other things. Meanwhile, I've been putting in a little time lately to help the Facebook group 'Range Rover CSKs' consolidate a list of these special editions.

This is something I really enjoy, researching the history of the many Land Rover variants, but it's not something I can do alone, so if you're able to shed any light on the vehicles here, or others, please get in touch.

NUMBERS, PLEASE (01)

Built in 1990, the special edition Range Rover CSKs were ultimately derived from some experiments to develop a sporty Range Rover that started in the mid-1980s and included the Olympic prototype.

The selling points were their all-black paintwork, the initials of engineer Spen King, and the fact that they had only two doors when most Range Rovers sold in the UK had four. The engine ECU was also (slightly) tweaked to give an extra couple of mph at the top end.

The story had its own myth. At the time, there were rumours that the 200-strong limited edition was a way of using up surplus



bodyshells because nobody wanted two-doors anymore.

Well, that was plainly rubbish, because the two-door models remained on sale outside the UK until 1994. There's an anecdote, too: Spen King told me that he had to sign his initials several times until the Styling people found a version they liked for the decal badges.

Anyway, the big problem is tying chassis

numbers to edition and registration numbers. We'll get there in the end, but if you have any information that might help, I'd be happy to hear it. The one in the picture, by the way, is number 11, and belonged to my friend Patrick Sutcliffe in Australia when I photographed it about 20-odd years ago.

ROLLOVER PROTECTION (02)

Long-standing Land Rover enthusiasts may

05



06



remember the time back in 1990 when John Craddock decided to thin out his personal collection of Land Rovers.

Among the ones he sold was this one, a mine-protected Series III 109. This and a quantity of others were created for Operation AGILA, which was the British contribution to a Commonwealth monitoring force that oversaw the lead-up to the 1980 elections in Rhodesia.

The reason was that the warring factions had created large minefields, and the monitoring force's vehicles therefore had to be blast-protected.

Most of the ones I've come across with this conversion are Series III 109s with the HF serials that were issued in 1978-1979; some were in the later FL series. This one was 27 HF 03. You can see the blast protection under the fuel tank, the sturdy rollover hoop, and the armour plate behind the seats. I've seen 26 HF 97 on the show circuit over the years, but not this one. Does anybody know where it went?

GET IN TOUCH

James Taylor's Roverphile pages have been running since 1996. They aim to dig into the darker corners of Land Rover's past, to shine a light on little-known areas of the marque's story, and whenever possible to reveal completely new material.

Some of the information comes from James' vast personal archive, which has been built up over more than 40 years, but we will always find room here for you to contribute material that you think others will find interesting.

If you can add to something you've read in Roverphile, or want to read more about an area of the marque's history, you can contact James by e-mail at roverjames@btinternet.com

07



TOUGH TRUCK AND TROLLEYBUS (03)

If you've already discovered Graeme Aldous' SXF database on the web, you won't need me to tell you that it's all about the Series One 88in Land Rovers supplied to the Civil Defence organisation in 1957-58.

This was a volunteer organisation designed to respond to national emergencies and was set up with a particular eye on the threat of nuclear war. When it was disbanded in 1968, the Land Rovers were sold off.

This is a favourite picture of mine, which I assume is an official photograph taken on the occasion of Bradford Corporation celebrating 60 years of running trolleybuses in 1971.

Bradford bought SXF 820 in September 1968, painted it in corporation colours and used it as a general runabout in the engineering department. Among its uses was to tow immobilised trolleybuses (electric traction is nothing new), as seen here.

Norman Hinchcliffe told me the story of how it was later transferred to a subsidiary company of the West Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, but was not welcomed by its new owners, and mysteriously caught fire one night and was destroyed.

A 101, BUT NOT AS WE KNOW IT (04)

If you think that all 101s look pretty much alike, here's a picture to challenge that thought. Land Rover supplied 101s to a small number of overseas armed forces, and among them was the Royal Guard in Oman.

A total of 42 in the 959 chassis series vehicles went there during 1976-1977, LHD vehicles with 12-volt electrical systems, and 37 of them looked pretty much as you might expect. The other five didn't.

They were supplied through the intermediary of a company in London that had a long association with the Omani Government, and we think that all five were bodied as ambulances by Pilcher-Greene at Burgess Hill in Sussex. At least three certainly were, and you can see all of them in this picture, which nonplussed 101 enthusiasts for

several years.

We now know what it shows thanks to an enthusiast who visited the Museum of the Sultan's Armed Forces in Muscat about 12 years ago. Among its exhibits is one of these ambulances, slightly disfigured with a later grille but readily recognisable and described as a 1976 delivery.

SORTING OUT A BIT OF HISTORY (05, 06, 07)

Earlier this year, Chris Whiteley bought a rather sad-looking Carmichael FT/6 fire tender that hadn't been on the road for ages. Knowing of my liking for these things, he contacted me to see if I could help him with its backstory.

The chassis number helped me identify it as a November 1964 vehicle, and Chris believed it had served at the Forth Road Bridge. I knew they had owned an FT6, but hadn't identified it, so this was a breakthrough. I had in my records the registration number CSY 110C, which checked out through the DVLA as a Land Rover of the right age, but the story was about to become more complicated.

Chris made contact with a group called the Briggers, which focuses on the history of the bridge, and Ron from that group got back to him with two photographs of the vehicle.

It wasn't CSY 110C, though, but CSX 220C, which is faithfully reproduced on an Oxford Diecasts model. Oddly, though, CSX 220C isn't listed by the DVLA, so Ron is now trying to discover whether there were actually two of them.

For the moment, Chris has a Land Rover to restore and knows what it should look like. And I've been able to add an FT/6 to my records, together with the possibility of a second one. We're both happy with the outcome, but now we have to explain where the yellow paint you can see in the picture came from. Was CSX 220C used on an airfield at some point? **CLR**



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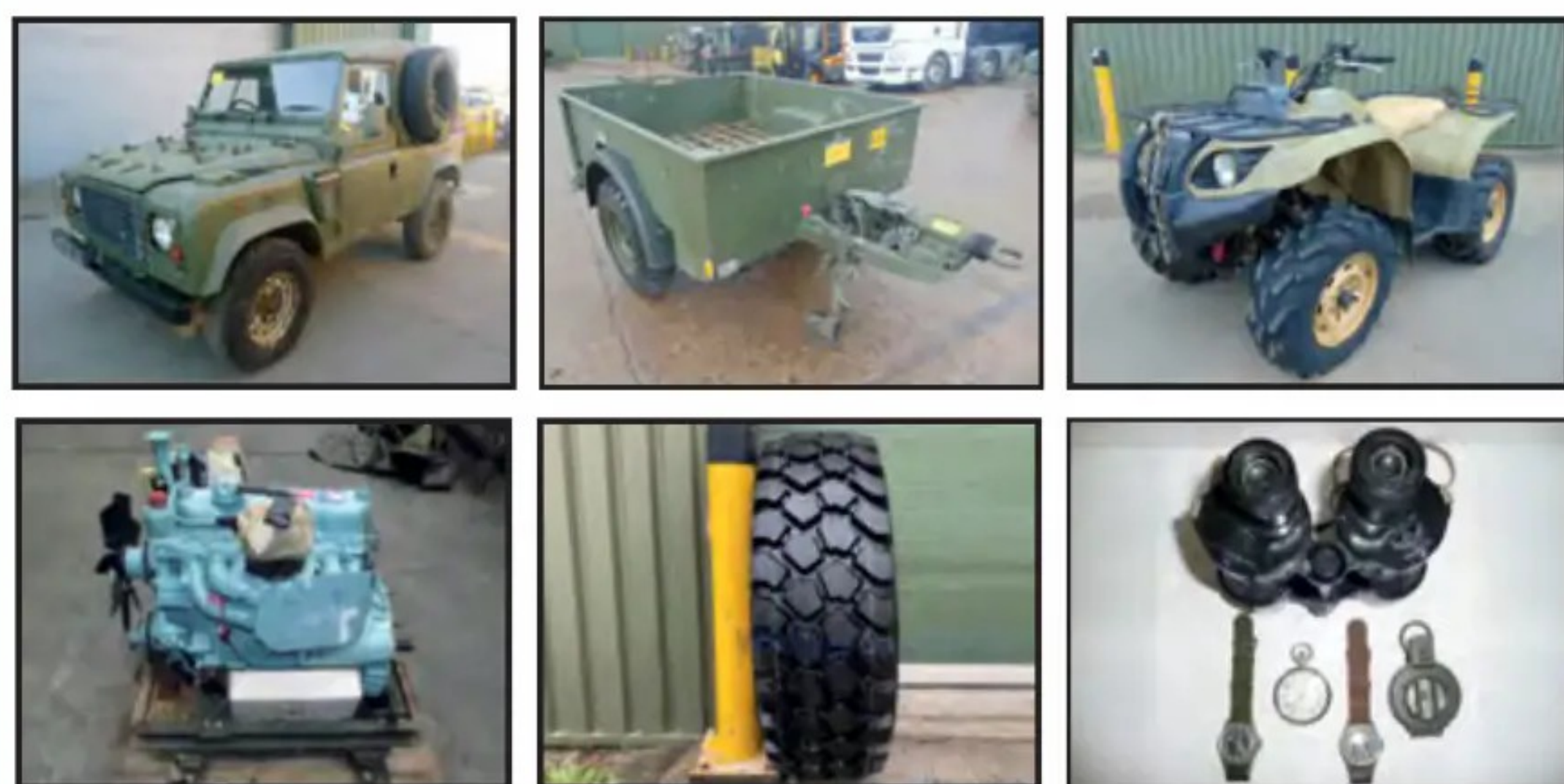
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Lovely patina on these vehicles from the Series One Club

A GATHERING IN THE HILLS

The Land Rover section at the Stretton Hills Classic Vehicle Show is growing fast; **Clare Westbrook** went along to find out more

I was intrigued to receive an invitation to the Stretton Hills Classic Vehicle Show. Though it is relatively close to home, I hadn't heard of it before. Held over the weekend of July 20 and 21 this year, the venue - Barton Grange - is easy to find, on the A49 south of Shrewsbury.

The Shropshire Classic Land Rovers group organise the Land Rover section, with camping for the weekend, a DIY field kitchen barbecue, and a Sunday morning breakfast run-out in the Shropshire Hills.

Entry to the show was free, with a small camping fee for Friday and Saturday: all proceeds will be donated to charity. Sadly, we couldn't stay for the weekend, but we arrived early on Saturday morning.

It was obvious from the start that this is a show by enthusiasts for enthusiasts. The organisers were on the field, greeting new arrivals with big smiles and a warm welcome.

By 10am, there were already several long rows of Land Rovers on display, some with bonnets raised, some with tea brewing on the tailgate. Visitors were wandering among them, chatting away, peering into engine bays, even getting tools out to give a helping hand.

Vehicles ranged from early Series Ones through Series IIs and IIIs, to classic two-door Range Rovers, Defenders and early Discoverys. There were some lovely Lightweights and a surprising number of 101 Forward Controls. A 'Judge Dredd' City Cab was also in attendance, attracting the usual attention.

In all, 90 Land Rovers came together at the show. Some were staying all weekend, some just came for a few hours, because unlike many shows, even though your vehicle would be 'on display', you could come and go as you pleased.

We were sad to miss the Sunday morning drive-out up the Long Mynd. I

believe the views were spectacular, as was the breakfast at the Midland Gliding Club café. Hopefully, we'll get to enjoy them next year.

The Stretton Hills Classic Vehicle Show is only two years old, but the organisers are ambitious, aiming to create the biggest annual classic Land Rover gathering in Shropshire. The date for 2026 hasn't been announced yet, but we plan to be there if we can. **CLR**



Organisers Dave Hoult (L) and Paul Paddock (R) from Shropshire Classic Land Rovers, with Tonto, Dave's 1977 101FC



Mike Tait's 1958 Series II (335 JPK, registered 1959) won Best in Show



A lovely 109in with Harvey Frost crane, plus rather eye-catching neighbour

FIRST OVERLAND CELEBRATION

Andrew Stone joins more than 200 Land Rover owners in London to Celebrate 70 Years of the First Overland

WORDS AND PICTURES **ANDREW STONE**

More than 200 Land Rovers took to the streets of London on Sunday, August 31, to mark the 70th anniversary of the First Overland expedition – the legendary 1955 road journey from London to Singapore.

The convoy gathered at Belgrave Square before heading west to Bremont HQ 'The Wing' in Henley-on-Thames, where adventurers, celebrity overlanders, and fans joined together in tribute to the remarkable journey that took place 70 years ago.

At the heart of the celebration was Tim Slessor, who recently turned 94. Tim was one of the original six young men on the 1955 expedition and today remains one of only three surviving members. He is also the author of the best-selling First Overland, a book that has become a cornerstone of the travel writing genre and continues to inspire adventurers worldwide.

Messages of support flooded in from across the globe – from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States – underlining the enduring impact of the journey he made.

Highlights of the day included the convoy



Tim Slessor with Alex Bescoby at The Grenadier pub in London

of more than 200 Land Rovers, which included everything from Series Ones to the new Defender, a performance by the Band of the Grenadier Guards, a reunion of the First and Last Overland teams and a special Q&A hosted by celebrity overlanders, attended by global enthusiasts.

All proceeds went to supporting the Gurkha Welfare Trust, helping Gurkha veterans and their families in Nepal.

Giving an interview from The Grenadier Pub, where the team left from in 1955, Tim said that while the idea had initially seemed "crazy", the further they got along



The convoy of Land Rovers departs for Henley-on-Thames



A replica of Oxford was on hand to drive Tim around Belgrave Square



Tim addressed crowds in Belgrave Square

the route, the more they believed it could be done.

"It was a challenge to us, and we responded to the challenge and pulled it off," he said.

Tim said it would be hard for anyone today to trace the original journey and that they were fortunate that the timing had been right for them to undertake it.

"Today, I felt the same joy I had driving into Singapore all those years ago. I could never have imagined that, 70 years on, our journey could have one final hurrah."

As for the Series Ones used on the trip, Tim said that while there were other vehicles that they could have used, they may not have had the same support from the manufacturers that they received from Land Rover at the time.

He added: "Somehow in the run-up (to the journey), we proved to Land Rover it was worth their while to back us. Once we were joined up, they had as much to lose as we did, as there was a certain amount of publicity around the attempt, and we were in it together."



The Band of the Grenadier Guards performed outside The Grenadier pub

The story of the First Overland began with six university graduates from Oxford and Cambridge, eager for adventure, deciding to attempt an unprecedented overland journey from London to Singapore.

Their goal was to prove it was possible to drive the length of what was then a largely unmapped and often dangerous route. At the time, no one had completed this specific 18,000-mile journey, making it a monumental and widely doubted undertaking.

The team secured a sponsorship from the Rover Company, a decision that would prove pivotal for both the expedition and the future of the Land Rover brand. Rover provided them with two Series One 86in Station Wagons, which the team famously nicknamed 'Oxford' and 'Cambridge'.

On September 1, 1955, the six young men set off from The Grenadier pub in London, beginning an epic adventure through some of the world's most challenging landscapes.

The expedition traversed Europe and the Middle East before facing the most treacherous part of the journey: the dense jungles and non-existent roads of Burma (now Myanmar) and beyond.

Their success not only made history but also cemented the Land Rover's reputation as a rugged and reliable vehicle, capable of conquering the impossible.

Alex Bescoby, organiser and leader of the 2019 Last Overland recreation, said: "The First Overland is about friendship, courage, and the great British spirit of adventure. To see hundreds of Land Rovers roll out in its honour, 70 years later, was extraordinary."

To coincide with the celebration, the documentary series The Last Overland was made freely available worldwide on Free Documentary's YouTube channel: youtube.com/@FreeDocumentary. CLR

IT'S GOODBYE FROM ME

Kate Russell bids a fond farewell to her IIA camper

WORDS KATE RUSSELL
PICTURES KATE RUSSELL AND ADE SAVAGE

Bay Search and Rescue were worthy recipients of this year's charity donation

Ever since I acquired my 127 Pulse ambulance camper in 2020, I've debated selling my 1965 Series IIA with the Dormobile roof.

Over the years, I came up with countless excuses not to go ahead: it needed chassis repairs, and I might want to use it as an alternative to the 127, among other reasons. But, truthfully, I liked it too much to bear the thought of parting with it. I even went as far as advertising it on several websites, but nothing ever came of it.

Then, a solution presented itself: my brother-in-law, Ade, expressed interest in buying it and sprucing it up for his camping trips in the Lake District.

I bought the Series IIA, I named Finn, due to the FNN registration, on a whim in 2016 at Leafer's at Pit at Caphouse Colliery, near my home in West Yorkshire. I had driven my Series III there and was wandering around the field when I spotted the dark green camper, its green and white candy-

'The brakes were practically non-existent, and there was a strong smell of petrol'

striped Dormobile roof rising majestically above the other assembled leaf-sprung Land Rovers. I liked what I saw when I looked inside and noticed a "For Sale" sign on the window.

After some haggling over the price, and without taking it for a test drive or even sitting in the driver's seat, I found myself the proud owner of a vehicle I didn't know



Finn for sale at Leafers at t'Pit in August 2016

I wanted. Just at that moment, a friend showed up who was looking for a Station Wagon for his son, and a few minutes later, that deal was done as well. We all went home happy.

However, my euphoria lasted only until the next day when I picked up the camper and drove it home. The brakes were practically non-existent, and there was a strong smell of petrol. Fortunately, these and a few other faults were soon resolved, and it was good to go.

I spruced up the interior with a coat of light green paint and new furnishings to brighten everything up. I discovered some of its history by contacting a previous owner—this was before GDPR came into force, allowing one to apply to the DVLA for a copy of all former keepers. It turned out the vehicle had belonged to the RAF, which explained the military bumper, and it



The first outing to the CLR weekend in North Yorkshire in 2016 after Kate acquired the camper



The last time it was used by Kate and her daughter Rachel in 2020



A new interior is next on the agenda



In the workshop being prepared for painting

was taken out of service in 1975.

The interior had been adapted to store fishing rods in metal lockers along each side by one of the first civilian owners and had remained largely untouched until I bought it. It has a pull-out three-quarter bed settee, a camping bunk at roof level,

and a sink and cooker. Although it was wired for 240V, that looked a bit suspect, so I had it completely replaced.

Three weeks after I became the owner, we attended a CLR weekend in North Yorkshire, and everything went perfectly. Over the following years, the camper had a new coat of paint—Sage Green for the body and Limestone for the roof. I replaced the ageing 2,286cc petrol engine with a 200Tdi, along with adding power steering, which was a game-changer. No longer would I huff and puff my way up hills or struggle to manoeuvre it around corners. With the Tdi engine, I averaged 27mpg, a significant improvement from the 14mpg I was getting from the petrol engine.

Next came new lights, tyres, batteries, and an upgrade to the 12V system, followed by a diesel heater to keep the living area toasty.

We used it sporadically over the next few years for weekends away but didn't go too

far at all. One highlight was taking it off-road in North Yorkshire where it performed faultlessly.

And once we got the 127, we didn't use the Series IIA enough to justify further investment, and it languished in the garden, growing moss on the window seals.

Then, a few months ago, its transformation began. Ade and my husband, Mark, repaired the faulty power steering, welded up the rear end of the chassis, replaced the door seals, and fitted LED lights for the sidelights and indicators.

The biggest and most time-consuming task was giving it a new coat of paint; it was sanded down nearly to bare metal, an outer wing was replaced, and three coats of Deep Brunswick Green were applied. When it was finished, it looked splendid!

Our local mechanic gave it a thorough inspection, deemed it roadworthy, and off it went to its new home in the northeast.

Ade said: "I had previously driven the IIA and liked it, but I found it uncomfortable due to a back injury. Once that was resolved, I had another go and realised it was just what I needed for camping in the Lakes with my dog, Louis.

"Over the winter, I plan to work on the interior to configure it to what works best for me. I'm really looking forward to getting out and about in it very soon."

As for me, it couldn't have gone to a better home. We have plans to meet up next summer for camping weekends, so I'll still get to see it. CLR



The only time Kate took Finn off-roading. It performed without fault



Proud new owner: Ade and his dog Louis are ready for adventure

DRIVING THE TRANS MOROCCO TRAIL

WORDS AND PICTURES **TOBY SAVAGE**

'A local woman had lit a fire in a communal bread oven, and the smell coming from it was irresistible'

To put things into perspective, there was half a day of driving this track as it wound its way around the contours of the mountains



PART 2: INTO THE MOUNTAINS

After the initial troublesome start of leaking clutch hydraulics and taking the wrong route through the Chegaga region, a comfortable night in Riad Assia in the heart of old Foum Zguid offered a fresh start to driving the southern section of the Trans Morocco Trail (TMT).

The weather was perfect, with a light breeze and warm sunshine, and the Land Rover was fuelled up and ready to go. We headed north out of town, then west onto new territory for me.

Ahead of us were the Anti-Atlas Mountains separating us from the Atlantic Ocean. Soon we were climbing, and the road was getting progressively narrower, often with a steep drop to one side.

Villages were becoming scarcer, and when we did pass through one, the locals stopped to look at us, returning our cheery waves and smiles. Children appeared from doorways with outstretched hands to be rewarded with sweets we had bought for the purpose. In the village of Tlile, we stopped to check our route, and a smiling adult face appeared at the window. In a mixture of French, English and Arabic, our new friend Mohammed invited us into his house for tea.

Neda and I had both agreed that part of our trip should be to engage with locals and accept their hospitality, which is always well-meant, even if sometimes it is in the hope of securing a sale.

We were introduced to his wife, who left the room to make tea and prepare biscuits and dates for us to eat. This was exceptional, as it was the last few days of



The mountain village of Aznaguen resembles a picture postcard of what an oasis village should look like, with water and palm trees

Ramadan and they had been fasting for four weeks, but their hospitality was genuine and they enjoyed showing us their house and small garden, and rather bizarrely exchanging WhatsApp contact details.

Mohammed gave us two bags of his dates and would not accept any payment, so I presented him with a copy of my book, *Larking about in Land Rovers*, which caused some amusement! Our route took us above the tree line into barren mountain territory with views across a lunar landscape and just one narrow track snaking around the steep slopes. We thought that we would struggle to find firewood so high up.

It was quite chilly at night, and sitting around a fire offered the perfect end to the day. To our left, the trail flattened out

a little, and there was an idyllic meadow of wild flowers and trees that represented the perfect spot to camp.

Gaining access to a level bit was a first gear, low ratio rock crawl, but we achieved it with the occasional bit of wheel spin. Neda had taken it upon herself to be the fire monitor and soon had a reassuring flame, while I set the Carawagon up for the night.

As is often the way in such places, the morning saw the arrival of a shepherd. He came down to meet us, and we all shook hands and exchanged the greeting 'Salaam Alaikum'.

What was instantly noticeable to us city dwellers was how healthy he looked. He was probably about 45, but slim, fit and with sparkling brown eyes and a big smile.

'The landscape had changed from the high mountains to a lower rocky plain'



Dawn on one of many remote camping spots. The big advantage of using the Carawagon is its exceptional off-road ability



The most perfect camping area appeared to the left of the track, carpeted with wild flowers



Not being in a hurry was perfect on this loose gravel surface. One slip could be disastrous



Another of many wild camps. This one is at 29°1'55" N 8°58'53" W, which, if you put it into Google Earth, is in the middle of nowhere

We shared some of our breakfast with him before he returned to his day's work. When ready, we continued west with the roads becoming ever more challenging and empty.

To help preserve the venerable Carawagon, I opted for low ratio and used third and fourth gears most of the time. Although slow, this was a safer pace. Vehicle breakages tend to be broken shock absorbers and springs caused by driving too fast and carrying too much weight.

After two full days of driving tracks, we found a tarmac road to take us into Tata, where we found a cheap hotel for the night to reset our bodies for the next few days.

Back on the trail, the route instructions said 'take right turn onto river bed'. The reality was a track that ran alongside the dried-up river bed, and we drove it for the next three hours, until climbing out onto a regular track.

The landscape had changed from the high mountains to a lower rocky plain and was far easier to drive. Reaching Assa, we took the RN21 north to Guilimim. Although classed as a road, this was still an exciting drive, but arrival in Guilimim was timed to catch the end of the morning's Camel Market - a weekly event that covers the sale of everything from camels to jars of honey. »

Neda took it upon herself to be in charge of the fire, while Toby attended to the more specialised job of converting the Carawagon from capable off-roader to living accommodation



The author, Toby Savage, enjoying coffee out of the back of the Carawagon he has owned and used since 1997



Guilimim Camel Market is not just camels. It is a full onslaught on the senses, with noise, smells and wads of cash, as everything is bought and sold in one big square of madness

TRAVEL

It was exciting to see locals bartering with large wads of cash over a small herd of goats. We replenished supplies of fresh food from the market and enjoyed the interaction with various stallholders, and it was reassuring to know that this food was all local and probably harvested the day before.

Now, within a few hours of the sea, we continued to the southern end of the Trans Morocco Trail at Cap Draa, a golden beach with Atlantic waves breaking on its sands.

Having achieved the first objective of driving most of the southern section of the TMT, we now had to make a new plan to head north. The easy choice was to follow the coastline and see what rewards it offered.

The other factor was that it was approaching the end of Ramadan, and it would be good to be in a town to witness the Eid celebrations. We slowly made our way along the coast road until we reached Sidi Ifni, which looked like a big enough town to throw a good party!

Unable to find a suitable wild camping spot, we checked into Camping Sidi Ifni and parked up with all the motorhomes. That evening, we dressed up and joined the celebrations. My friend Neda is Iranian and knows the Eid protocol. We assumed that because the fasting had ended, there would be stalls selling street food, but walking along the esplanade, there were none.

All of the beach cafes were full, but only serving drinks. We asked a few people, and they said that families get together at home for a feast known as Iftar, and then come out and celebrate. We managed to find snacks of crisps and nuts, but that was it. In the morning, we continued north through Agadir and on to the small town of Tamri, which is known for its brightly painted houses. They did not disappoint, but the weather was changing with a drop in temperature and showers of rain.

A local woman had lit a fire in a communal



Some of the more remote camping places required some committed driving and took a couple of attempts

bread oven, and the smell coming from it was irresistible, so we bought a loaf and enjoyed it in the shelter of the Carawagon as the rain came down outside.

Neda had a flight booked back to her home in Sweden in a couple of days, so through mixed weather, we made our way back to Marrakech, bringing to an end this three-week adventure.

But I still had time to spare and was

determined to attempt some of the northern TMT sections in the High Atlas Mountains. I dropped Neda at the airport and stayed at the Relais de Marrakech campsite, well known in the overland community. It was a good place to swap tales with other travellers over a beer and make a plan for the rest of my adventure.

To be continued next month. [CLR](#)



Buying meat for an evening meal was a very different experience from at home. There was a lot available and no plastic packaging



In Tamri, the weather changed to wet and rather chilly, but this local woman had lit a fire in a communal bread oven and started baking. Irresistible

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PHOTO ROS WOODHAM

THE WORLD'S GREATEST ADVENTURE REMEMBERED



The Camel Trophy was billed as '1,000 miles of adventure' and memories of those miles are still fresh after 45 years

WORDS AND PICTURES JOHN CARROLL

Earlier this year, Ro and I were double-checking dates against the kitchen wall planner when she asked: “What’s that thing you go to with the ‘yellow stickers’?”

As I have followed the Camel Trophy since seeing the 1983 Zaire event video on a loop in an Italian ski resort bar in 1984 and had recently paid the admission fee for the Camel Club’s 45th anniversary rally, this made me laugh.

It also made me wonder about the continuing popularity of what was once a widely publicised global event. Clearly, its ‘yellow sticker’ branding doesn’t mean anything to lots of people, including Mrs C. But for those of us who were interested in 4x4s when it was a current, annual

event, and those who have come to it later because of an interest in Land Rovers, it’s a very different story.

The Camel Trophy started in 1980, hence the 45th anniversary, but ended 25 years ago. It’s been a quarter of a century, yet people still cherish the different types of Land Rovers that the event depended on. Many individuals involved—whether as competitors, in management, or in media roles—continue to hold fond memories of the experiences it provided.

It can be hard to explain exactly what the Camel Trophy was to the extent that it’s easier to say what it wasn’t! It wasn’t an international race like the Paris-Dakar or an international rally like the Monte Carlo.

It was an international ‘competitive

convoy’ with the yellow stickers being those of the Camel brand of cigarettes that, reportedly, cost as much to run annually as the Camel Formula 1 team of the same era.

It ran for almost two decades from 1980, when just three German teams of two in licence-built CJ5 Jeeps battled through Amazonian mud.

Its further 4x4 adventures came to an end in 1998 when 20 teams from separate nations drove Freelanders in the testing snowy and icy environments of Chile and Argentina.

There wasn’t a 1999 event, but a postscript came in 2000 in the form of a Honda outboard-motor-powered rigid inflatable boat (RIB) challenge in the Pacific Ocean islands of Tonga and Samoa. »

‘Before 2000, the event received varying levels of interest and followings in different countries’

Morning on the
Eastnor Castle
campsite

MEMORY LANE

Its era came to an end after 2000 when there was a ban on cigarette advertising in sports. It was not just the Camel event, though, as cigarette brands soon disappeared from race cars and bikes at circuits worldwide.

Before 2000 the event received varying levels of interest and followings in different countries. This resulted in publicity and promotions that differed from one to another.

One thing that was roughly the same in all competing countries was how the teams were selected. From paper applications, a batch was invited to an initial regional selection in the form of an outdoor weekend where winching and orienteering were among the activities.

The exact number varied, but in one or two weekends, it was down to 12 from which the final four were selected.

These four went to the international selections, after which the chosen duo was announced as the team. To manage costs and promote variety, on occasions, some regional selections saw a couple of countries sharing the weekend and interacting, providing a hint of things to come.

Back then, most European countries had a number of monthly magazines dedicated to Land Rover and 4x4 enthusiasts. The selection weekends held in these countries were consistently reported on. Something that wasn't seen in the UK, however, were advertising hoardings and bus stop posters advertising that year's Camel event.

I remember flying back from a French international selection one year and being asked by the French customs guy what I had been doing in France for a long weekend.

I explained that I was on the way home from a Camel Trophy event.

"Ah, le Camel Trophy!" he replied enthusiastically. I was able to give him a French Camel sticker out of my camera bag,

and he happily waved me through.

The UK market for Camel cigarettes and its enthusiasm for the Camel Trophy was a bit more low-key, but there were loads of Brits involved with the overall event management, as well as the group running UK selections. Appropriately, the current Camel Club is similar in that it is administered from the UK but has a

worldwide membership.

Following the all-German Jeep event of 1980 in Brazil, the next event, Sumatra in 1981, remained all-German but with five teams and V8 Range Rovers.

In 1982, the event moved to Papua New Guinea again, using Range Rovers for pairs of teams from Germany, Holland, Italy and the USA. The move to Zaire (Democratic



Original Camel Land Rover Defenders during the Saturday morning convoy



The UK Team vehicle from the 1988 event was originally driven by Marc Day and Jim Benson



Iain Chapman, competitor in 1987 and subsequently, event director

'One thing that is completely beyond doubt is how the Camel spirit endures'



Republic of the Congo) in Africa saw the event grow to accommodate seven teams from seven countries using Land Rover Series III 88ins, while the management and support crews used Series III 109ins.

The fifth anniversary event returned to Brazil, where 12 teams comprising two teams from each of six countries used Land Rover One Tens as both team and management vehicles. The Land Rover Ninety was team transport while One Tens were used by the support crews in Borneo in 1985, where 16 teams took part, and, of these, all but two nations had two teams each.

The event was definitely growing, and the first UK team (Jerry Gatley and David Scott) took part in 1986 when the event went down under to Australia's northern outback.

Other first-timers, teams from Malaysia, France and Australia participated, again driving Land Rover Ninetys and One Tens as support vehicles. Although only 14 teams took part, it was the largest international gathering of participants in the event's history so far.

Madagascar offered the event a challenge in 1987 when 14 teams used VM diesel-powered Range Rovers, as did the support teams. The UK team was George Bee and Iain Chapman, while the US team comprised Don Floyd and Tom Collins. »

Because of their use in a support role, Camel 110 Defender Station Wagons are among the most numerous survivors





A recovery in progress using the Dixon Bate rigid bars as happened on events

In 1988, it was back to Indonesia, in particular the island of Sulawesi, where all the Camel vehicles were One Tens. The award for Team Spirit was won by Jim Benson and Marc Day of the United Kingdom.

It was One Tens all round again in 1989 in a convoy that covered another stretch of Brazilian highway, a 1,062-mile route through the rainforest from Alta Floresta to Manaus, in the rainy season. This event saw a British victory achieved by brothers Bob and Joe Ives.

There were plenty of changes for 1990 including to the team vehicles. These were the new Land Rover Discovery in three-door, 200Tdi form, while support vehicles were Land Rover 110 and 127 models.

The event went somewhere colder for the first time, namely Lake Baikal in Siberia. The United Kingdom was represented by Andrew Dacey (Wales) and Richard Tomlinson (England).

It was four-door 200Tdi Discoverys for 1991 in Tanzania and Burundi. There were 17 national teams, and among them, the UK was represented by Andy Street and Tim Dray, Belgium by Geert Blondeel and Tony Carrette and the Soviet Union by Vadim Saveliev and Mikael Snarski.

It was Discoverys for the teams again and 110s for the support vehicles for 1992 in Guyana, as it would be each year until 1998.

There was no UK team in 1993 in Sabah, Malaysia, but one reappeared for 1994 when Mark Cullum and Damien Taft made the grade at the selections for the three-country event of Argentina, Paraguay and Chile.

Mundo Maya in South America in 1995



The Discovery driven by the French team of Gerard Champoiral and Lionel Lattard on the 1995 Mundo Maya event



A German registered 110 Defender support vehicle



Wim de Vocht (1996, Belgium) and Karen McDonald (1997, UK)



Andy Dacey (1990, UK) and Richard Barr (event management)

'It has staged numerous reunion events similar to this gathering at Eastnor'

was the sole Camel event not named after its geographic location. The 'World of the Maya' was ambitious, involving driving through Belize, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras.

In 1996, the event went back to Kalimantan in Indonesia, and in 1997, to Mongolia. It included more mountain bike and kayaking tests, and the UK was represented by Karen McDonald and Trevor Smith.

Even bigger changes came in 1998 when the new Land Rover Freelander was selected as team transport for the event known as Tierra del Fuego. This event covered large distances in Chile and Argentina, although 110s still played the support role and carried the adventure equipment that included canoes, bikes, snowshoes, skis and snowboards for the expected cold and snowy conditions.

There was no event in 1999 and the 2000 event, Tonga Samoa, became a 1,000 nautical miles RIB competition in the Pacific Ocean for teams from 16 countries, including the UK.

By my reckoning (and I may have missed someone), this means that there were only 26 possible places for UK team members.

Of these, nine were at Eastnor for the 45th Anniversary event. These were Jerry Gatley (1986), Iain Chapman (1987), Bob Ives (1989), Joe Ives (1989), Andrew Dacey (1990), Tim Dray (1991), Mark Cullum (1994), Karen McDonald (1997) and Andy Watkins (1998).

Plenty of members of other nations' teams were also present and my incomplete

list includes, Tom Collins (1987, US), Cem Nomer (1989, Turkey), Geert Blondeel (1991, Belgium), Vadim Saveliev (1991, Soviet Union), Jose Luis Hidalgo Vega (1994, Canaries), Klaus Hass (1994, South Africa), Mickey Woolmington (1995, Canaries), (Deidre Morael (1996, Belgium), Wim de Vocht (1996, Belgium), Belen de la Fuente (1996, Canaries) and Denis Rozand (1996, France).

Many of these competitors went on to become support drivers and similar, and one, Iain Chapman, became the event director. After winning the Camel Trophy, Bob and Joe Ives were awarded the prestigious Segrave Trophy from the Royal Automobile Club.

This is awarded to the British nationals who demonstrate 'outstanding skill, courage and initiative on land, water and in the air.' This puts the brothers up there with aviator Amy Johnson, rally driver Louise Aitken-Walker and speed king Donald Campbell.

Also present was a sizeable group of management and support personnel, including Dickie Barr, Duncan Barbour, event doctor Mickle Irani, Ron Neely and Roger Baines. All the Camel competitors and the event management and support crew personnel were happy to chat with the members of the Camel Trophy Club, many of whom are custodians of the unmistakable yellow Land Rovers.

Plenty of photos were taken, hands shaken, numerous reminiscences »



These three vehicles were driven from France to attend this anniversary event



Team members and support staff reunited, in many cases, after 20+ years

shared, and many copies of the Camel photographer, Nick Dimbleby's, book, were autographed over the course of the weekend.

The Camel Trophy Club is different from most Land Rover clubs because, although it celebrates an international competition, it is not a club that runs off-road competitions.

It has staged numerous reunion events similar to this gathering at Eastnor, but also trips to Morocco and the like. In parallel, it has become the world's foremost record of the Camel Trophy and a valuable resource for Camel Trophy enthusiasts.

It welcomes owners of real and replica

Camel vehicles and those with an interest in the history of the Camel Trophy. The club's archives contain numerous videos and an almost infinite number of official and press photos of Camel Trophy events and pre-scouts.

After all, Land Rover's involvement with the Camel Trophy lasted for 18 years from 1981 to 1998, and during this time, the entire range of Land Rovers was used. This included Range Rover, Series III, Ninety, One Ten, 127, Defender, Discovery and Freelander, all painted in the distinctive yellow colour scheme referred to as Sandglow by the manufacturers.

It was only the first and final Camel

Trophy events that didn't use vehicles supplied by Land Rover. The first used licence-built CJ5 Jeeps and the last, the RIBs. Examples of these in the form of a 'Shamel' replica 1980 CJ5 and three genuine RIBs were to be seen at this event.

Also on site were two other Camel rarities; the first was an ex-military M-series Bedford 4x4 truck that was one of a pair used by the Trophy in South America during the mid-'90s.

The other was a 1989 Japanese home market Mitsubishi Pajero (Shogun in the UK) with official Camel details. It ended up in the UK after being imported as a secondhand vehicle from Japan some years ago.

The various Camel Trophy Land Rovers were produced in both left-hand and right-hand drive, depending on the vehicle's role, the event location and the country whose team was driving it.

They were standard production line Land Rovers, albeit adapted and prepared by Land Rover's Special Vehicle Operations. From 1990 onwards, Camel Trophy vehicles were registered by Land Rover UK at its Solihull factory.

This means that they were allocated batches of Birmingham-area registrations and, because of the annual cycle of Camel Trophies, it is possible to date each event's vehicles by referring to the registration numbers. For example, the 1991 Tanzania Burundi vehicles used H-LON and H-JRW sequences, where



The Dixons' Defender 110 support vehicle crosses the bridge built under Bob Ives's supervision



Mid-'90s team members on stage on Friday night

the 'ON' and 'RW' indicate Birmingham. Considering the differing vehicles suggests that, because of all the support vehicles used, 110 Camel Station Wagons are the most numerous.

Then the combined variations of the Discovery I and its use on seven Trophies mean that Camel Discoverys are the most numerous of team vehicles.

Both these were true regardless of the number that have been lost to time. The Range Rovers and Freelanders are rarer, while the Series IIIs from Zaire seem to have disappeared completely, and I can't claim to have ever seen a genuine one. Famously, a 109in version appears in the event video being destroyed by fire.

This 45th anniversary event - 25 years after the Camel Trophy came to an end - attracted around 40 Camel Trophy vehicles of all types, including a few Shamels.

It also attracted a handful of G4 Challenge vehicles and one of the UK's 2006 participants, Brian Reynolds. The G4 was Land Rover's own adventure competition that took place in 2003 and 2006, but was cancelled in 2008.

There was a planned timetable of activities that stretched across the weekend. Friday night kicked off with communal food before informal presentations in one of the marquees, where different 'generations' of participants lined on the stage and chatted about their events for the benefit of club members.

On Saturday, the G4 guys ran an activity competition, while elsewhere on site, under the watchful eye of Bob Ives, groups built one of the tree trunk bridges synonymous with Camel Trophy expedition routes. Also offered were drives in new model Defenders with Land Rover Experience staff.

This tied in with news of Land Rover's new Defender Trophy adventure competition which is considered to be a unique global

initiative that will be the experience of a lifetime for participants.

The presentation revealed that it was inspired by Trophy and Challenge events of the past. Entrants from across the world will have the chance to reach the global final held in Africa during 2026.

During Saturday evening, there was an epic charity auction that made money for the RNLI for the most part. It raised well into four figures from the sale of a large collection of mostly used Camel clothing and equipment, including items donated in memory of Karl Trunk, a well-known event staff member.

The weather worsened overnight on Saturday, but a large group photo was still possible on Sunday morning before the event wound down, leaving friendships and reunions intact and new friendships made.

One thing that is completely beyond doubt is how the Camel spirit endures and



1989 participants; left to right; Cem Nomer (Turkey) Bob Ives (UK) and Joe Ives (UK)

'The G4 was Land Rover's own adventure competition that took place in 2003 and 2006, but was cancelled in 2008'

how shared experiences and hardships bind people together. I think it was a tremendous event with all the ingredients to make it so: long-lasting friendships; camping in the Deer Park at Eastnor, where much Camel history started; lots of Sandglow Land Rovers that told stories and a friendly bunch of enthusiasts that also had plenty of stories to tell.

Yes, 'Camel Trophy: 1,000 miles of adventure.'

Its legacy might not mean much to the general public any more, but to those involved, in any capacity, it offered life-changing experiences. It's also clear that legacy is safe in the hands of the Camel Trophy Club. That was demonstrated by its calm and relaxed but thorough organisation of this event. CLR



Replica 1980 event CJ5 Jeep prepared by Ben Stowe



The 1989 Camel Trophy, held in the Amazon rainforest of Brazil, used One Tens as the primary vehicle for both the competing teams and the support convoy. There were 14 teams competing over 1,410 km by road and 500 kms by barge. Considered as the toughest ever, it was won by brothers Bob and Joe Ives from the UK. Peter Denys and Frank Dewitte won the team spirit award JLR

CLASSIC LAND ROVER

Magazine



BLUE

Inspired by his grandfather, **Fran Baburic** tackled a near-impossible Series IIA rebuild before taking the vehicle on an Adriatic adventure

WORDS JAN HYRMAN PICTURES FRAN BABURIC

T I F U L



Croatia, which has plenty to offer tourists with gorgeous vistas like this one, is perfect Land Rover country

SERIES IIA

Browsing the classic Land Rover content on social media can be eye-opening – the reach the marque has had over the decades is amazing: I wonder at photos of Series Land Rovers from places as far away as Australia, the Caribbean, the US, and even Iran.

But often, places that are much closer to home can offer equally spectacular stories. One of the people I follow on Instagram is Fran Baburic, a 20-year-old from Croatia. A wood restorer by trade, he focuses on antique furniture dating back 100 years or more.

Fran was not a novice in the world of classic Land Rovers when he bought his first one. His grandfather had owned a Series One, telling young Fran stories of his exploits in the truck. Fran came to admire the vehicles for their practicality and fun factor.

Wanting to buy one for himself, he started by looking through the classified ads in Croatia, but there were few to choose from. The available ones were all in poor condition. He wanted a long wheelbase so that his family would fit in.

Eventually, he came across a 1968 Series IIA LWB Station Wagon with a 2,286cc



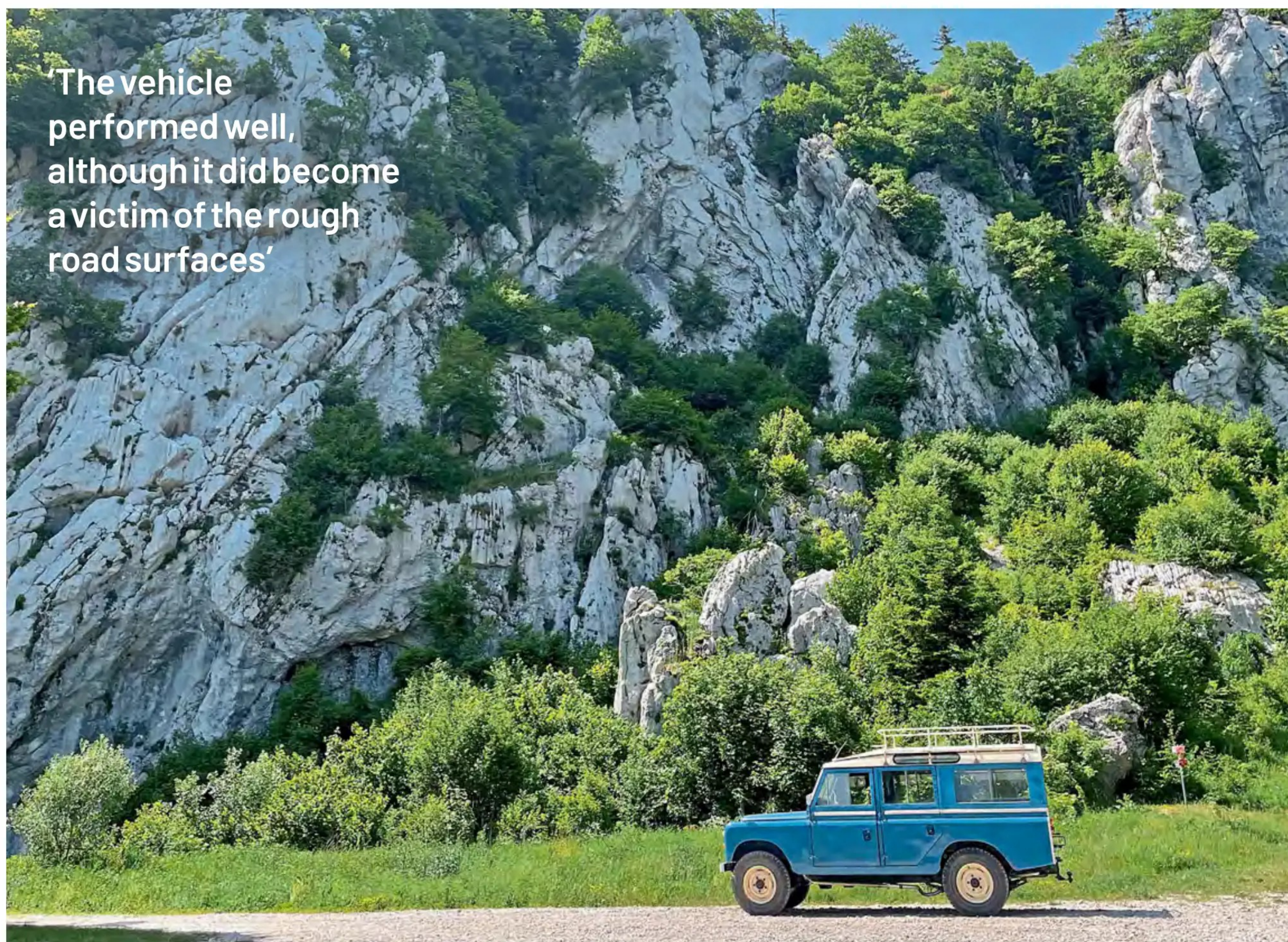
Spartan, but practical – the interior after restoration

diesel engine. The headlamps were already in the wings, and the front panel boasted the now quite rare Maltese cross grille.

The condition of the vehicle was considerably poorer than advertised, and Fran even considered scrapping the truck rather than trying to bring it back to life. Restoring it would be a huge undertaking in terms of time and money.

When he tried to renew the truck's registration, the vehicle failed the examination, and the mechanic told him the whole vehicle was held together by two bolts.

But all was not lost. Fran was not a novice; he and his father had already restored several classic Vespas from the 1950s. Additional help was provided by another



'The vehicle performed well, although it did become a victim of the rough road surfaces'

Since restoring the vehicle, Fran has already taken it on several adventures although he is possibly looking to sell it



A group photo opportunity from Fran's travels with other Land Rover enthusiasts

of Fran's relatives. His experience with bringing old locomotives and heavy lorries back to life proved to be helpful.

As often happens, taking the truck apart revealed the real state of affairs. The chassis was rotten beyond repair, with concrete used to hold the still extant bits together. The doors had to be repaired as well, with the steel framework also eaten away by corrosion.

The vehicle was disassembled down to the last bolt, and gradually, bits were prepared for

restoration. Buying a chassis from the UK was not an option: the cost and moving it across Europe were prohibitive.

Eventually, they decided to weld together a new one from 4mm sheet metal.

The gearbox was taken out and refurbished in the hallway of Fran's apartment, as he didn't have a garage. The complete restoration took them three years, but as with every Land Rover, the project is never fully complete.

Smaller details are being worked on, and Fran says the truck is still not finished – the interior needs some work.

Fran was able to trace some of the vehicle's history. Initially, it was painted grey and used by state authorities as a roadside assistance vehicle.

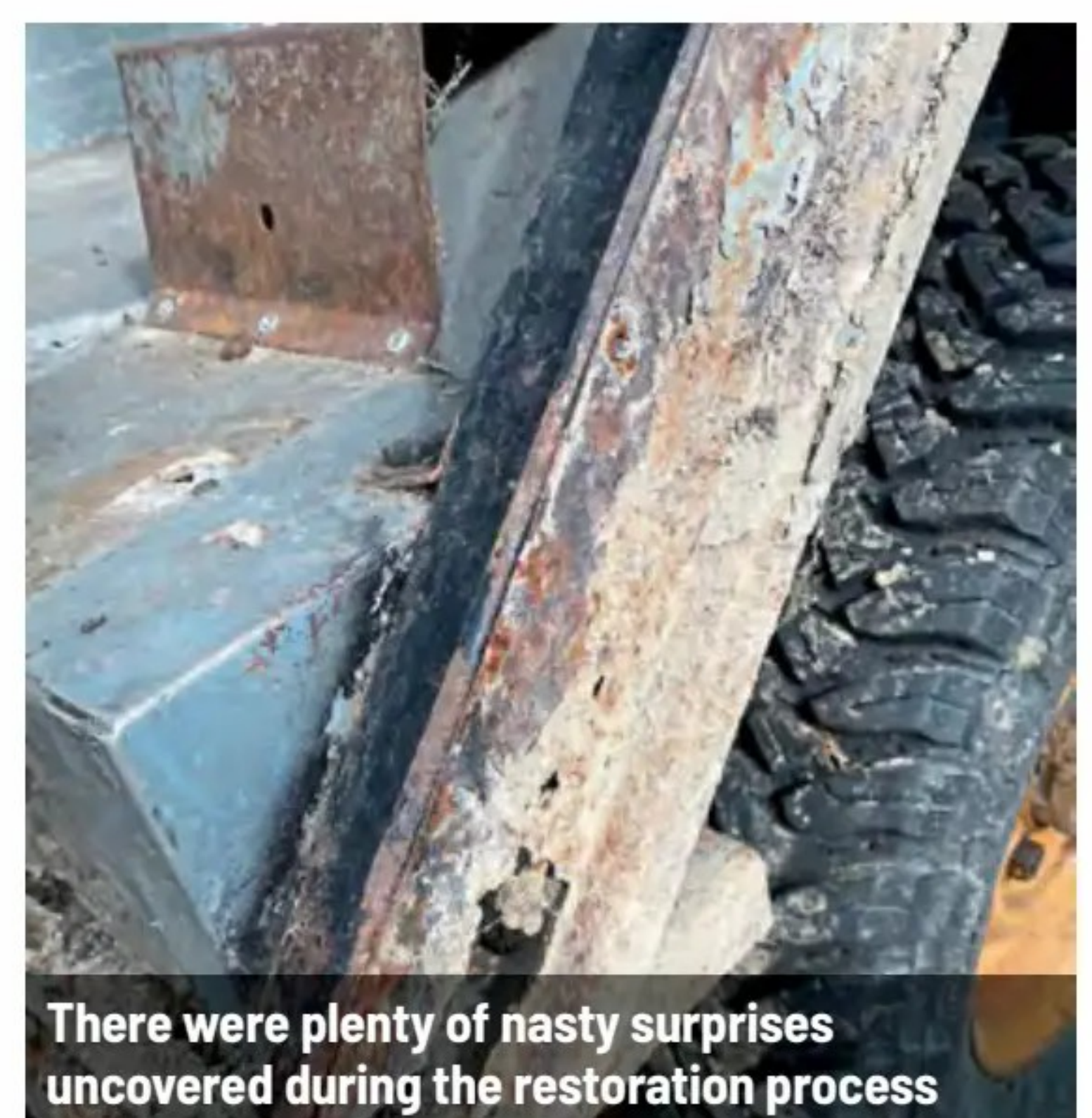
Later, a beekeeper bought it and had the roof painted bright yellow. The original »



A broken shock absorber mount that Fran had to repair after his trip to Žirje



The top shock absorber mount and the condition of the chassis were poor



There were plenty of nasty surprises uncovered during the restoration process



The Series IIA parked outside the Velebno hotel, damaged during Serbian shelling in 1991-95 and later rebuilt

SERIES IIA



Traversing one of the many gravel roads Fran and the Series IIA have been on together

paint was poor, with cappings and wheel hubs painted over, so Fran did the body blue, the roof white and the wheels limestone.

The bodywork and the rims were prepared for the new paint, and the chassis was painted and rust-proofed.

With work on the vehicle nearing completion, Fran started preparing for a summer holiday trip around Croatia.

First, he took the Land Rover on trips with a group of people who organise events via a WhatsApp group.

His newly restored vehicle looked right at home with the rest of the line-up, which included Series IIAs and IIIs. They visited places like the Novigrad na Dobri castle, a 14th-century fortress that once belonged to the Croatian noble family Frankopan.

It was renovated in the 19th century, but was burned down by Yugoslav partisans in 1944. Repeated attempts to restore it have so far failed, but since

1999, some work to stabilise and restore it has been done.

The group Land Rover trip included a detour through forests in the border regions of Slovenia, where they got lost, but eventually found their way out.

Fran's holidays took him from Zagreb through the Velebit mountains, where he spent a few days at his summer retreat, a mountain chalet. He then headed along the beautiful Croatian Adriatic coast to Šibenik, one of the largest historical cities in the region of Dalmatia.

The Cathedral of St James in Šibenik was listed as part of the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List in 2000, joined later by another local sight, the Fortress of St Nicholas.

Here, he boarded a ferry to the island of Žirje, the most remote permanently inhabited island in the Šibenik archipelago.

Fran has a weekend house there, so it is an ideal place to spend his holiday,



Fran did a good job with bringing the Land Rover back to life

'Fran was able to trace some of the vehicle's history'

driving around the island's gravel roads to the beach.

Grapes, olives, plums, figs and sour cherries are grown here, with fishing the main industry. Mass tourism on Žirje has mostly avoided this island, in comparison to the others in the Croatian Adriatic.

The vehicle performed well, although it did become a victim of the rough road surfaces with a broken rear shock absorber mount, but Fran was able to weld it back again.

Plans for the Series IIA remain in the balance as Fran's family doesn't share his sentiments about it. Rather, they see it as being "slow, noisy and annoying".

So for now, Fran is considering selling it for a short wheelbase that he can use just for himself.

I'll keep an eye on Fran and see what he ends up with, but considering the work he's done on the Series IIA, it would make a good buy for another enthusiast. **CLR**



The panels were mostly straight – always a bonus



The Land Rover Series IIA LWB as found by Fran



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Loch Lomond and Trossachs national park

When Created: 2002

Size: 720 square miles of forest, lochs and mountains

Counties: Perthshire, Stirlingshire, Dunbartonshire, Argyll, and Fife

Main Settlements: Callander and Aberfoyle

Favourite Spots: Glen Finglas, Balquhidder and the Bracklinn Falls

Local Food Specialities: Scotch pies and haggis

A Hidden Gem: Mohr 84, a quirky Highland hotel

Good Green Lanes: There are none, but I can recommend Three Lochs Forest Drive

Top Tip: Avoid the crowds by visiting in spring or autumn

‘First established as a national park in 2002, it encompasses some of Scotland’s finest landscapes’

The Land Rover pictured beside Loch Chon

THE TROSSACHS TRAIL



Loch Lomond & Trossachs national park offers a blend of history and stunning Highland scenery, writes **Craig Allen**

WORDS AND PICTURES **CRAIG ALLEN**

With my 90 back on the road again, I decided it was time to make a long-planned summer trip to Loch Lomond and the Trossachs. First established as a national park in 2002, it encompasses some of Scotland's finest landscapes. Lochs, forests and mountains: it's all here, making the park a Mecca for outdoor types.

My wife Cathy came along for the trip, and we had set aside two or three days for

exploring the park. We would normally be camping, but this time we had elected for a little more comfort and booked a couple of nights at the Oak Tree Inn at Balmaha.

After packing our bags into the Land Rover, we took the A9 heading for Stirling. The truck was running well, and a TD5 is comparatively quiet – even at motorway speeds.

After skirting around Stirling under the shadow of the famous castle, we picked up the A811 for Drymen. The weather was cloudy with occasional rain, but the forecast looked to be improving. »





Enjoying a pint at the Inn after a day's exploring

We couldn't check in at the inn until 3pm, so we drove to Luss on the western shore of Loch Lomond.

On the way, we passed through Alexandria, which was once home to early Scottish car makers Argyle Motors. Its purpose-built factory in the town was taken over by the Royal Navy in World War One for torpedo production, and the grand facade still stands.

We soon turned onto the A82 for Luss, famously used in the filming of the long-running Scottish soap opera *Take the High Road*. As a result, this tiny village has become a magnet for tourists, and after taking a few photos at the pier, we headed further north for Firkin Point.

There is easy access to the shoreline here, but the throngs of tourists had beaten us to it, so we didn't linger. This side of the loch is tourist central in the summer months, as there is easy access from



SS Sir Walter Scott returns from cruising Loch Katrine

Glasgow and the south via the A82.

Balmaha, our base for the trip, nestles at the foot of Loch Lomond and is a popular staging point on the West Highland Way (WHW). There is a small ferry here that makes regular trips out to Inchcailloch Island, which boasts a nature reserve and an 8th-century church.

The outside tables were thronged with walkers as we checked in at the inn, and we were allocated a cabin with a loch view.

After going for a wander around the village, we saw the bronze statue of Tom Weir set beside the water. This honours the climber, writer, and broadcaster who inspired so many people to explore the great outdoors. I well remember watching his programmes on Scottish TV in the 1980s, and the statue is a fitting memorial to the man.

We also passed the trail signs for Conic Hill, which is a stiff climb but offers spectacular views over the loch. We would be giving it a miss this evening, however, and retired to the inn for dinner.

Afterwards, we rolled out the map and planned our route for the following day



Checking camera settings beside Loch Lomond

over a drink in the bar. This would take in iconic landmarks as well as some of the remotest sections of the park.

We woke the following morning to brighter skies and, with the weather clearing, we set out to explore the minor road beside the loch. This is a 'twisty-turny' affair that parallels the WHW and offers expansive views over the water.

Stopping to admire the view is discouraged by numerous signs, as the road is mostly single track. We passed a couple of campsites along the way, and I made a mental note that these offered easy access to the water for paddling.

The road ends at the Clansman Bar and Grill, a quaint little hostelry providing refreshment for tired walkers. The public

'This seven-mile route winds its way through breathtaking scenery, past three tranquil lochs'

Camping Management Zone

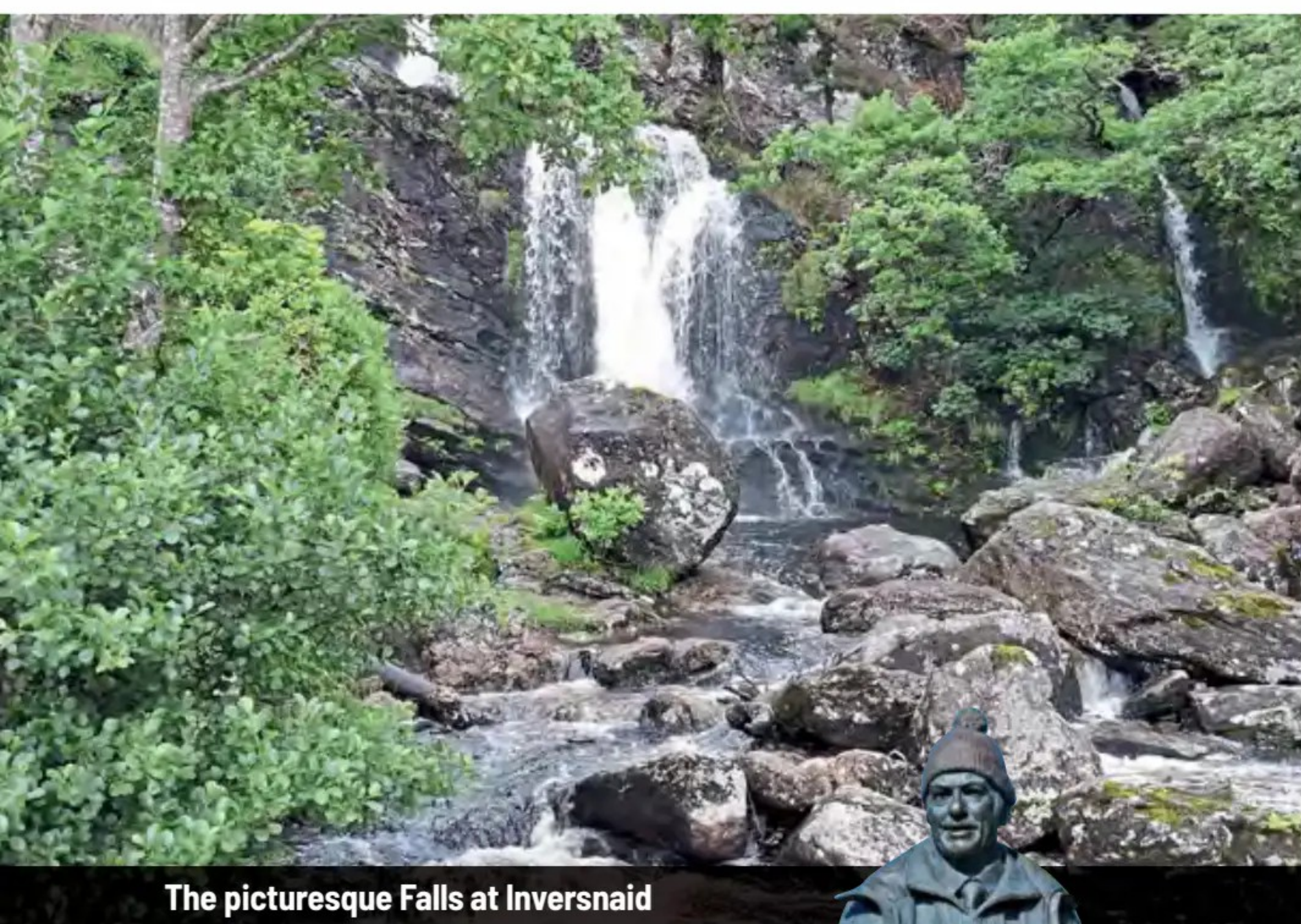
It's worth noting that 'wild camping' in the park is limited to designated areas between March and September when you require a permit. Also, the Scottish legislation on the freedom to wild camp refers to small groups on foot or by cycle and does not apply to motor vehicles.

The management zone was brought in as a direct result of people abusing the legislation, causing damage, leaving litter, camping gear and worse. There are, however, plenty of campsites throughout the park, many of which are in scenic locations.

The sheer number of campervans and motorhomes descending on the park each summer can cause problems. This has worn the locals' patience thin; however, a Land Rover tends to blend in with the landscape and causes far less ire.



Filling up the Land Rover for another day exploring the Park



The picturesque Falls at Inversnaid



Cathy takes pictures with her phone camera at Luss Pier

road ends here, too, although the trail continues to the next stop on the WHW at Inversnaid.

After making our way back to Balmaha, we headed to Aberfoyle, also known as the southern gateway to the Trossachs.

Once famous for its slate quarries, the village now survives on tourism and is a handy base to explore the park. After stopping to pick up a couple of bargain fleeces, we paused to watch a local farmer explain the various sheep breeds she had brought along. This was followed by a demonstration of her sheepdog herding a couple of ducks over a mini obstacle course – pure entertainment.

After the show, we jumped into the Land Rover and climbed out of the village onto Duke's Pass, leading to the Three Lochs Forest Drive. This seven-mile route winds its way through breathtaking scenery past three tranquil lochs, Lochan Reòidhte, Loch



The Tom Weir statue is a fitting tribute to the great outdoorsman

Drunkie and Loch Achray.

After a few miles, we turned off the route to visit Loch Katrine. This scenic loch is famous for its association with Sir Walter Scott, who was a regular visitor back in the 19th century.

The area is rich in history, not least through its connection to Rob Roy McGregor, who was born at Glengyle on its northern shore. The loch also boasts one of the few remaining steam passenger ships, SS Sir Walter Scott.

This veteran steamship has been cruising the waters here since 1900 and recently celebrated its 125th anniversary. Time didn't allow us to take a cruise, so we grabbed a coffee at the cafe before continuing on our way.

Retracing our steps as far as Aberfoyle, we headed west on the minor road to Inversnaid, which passes Loch Ard and Loch Chon.

We saw paddle boarders out on the latter, a reminder that the area is popular for all forms of water sports. The route gradually narrows to a single track, winding its way through remote wooded country.

The park is famous for its trees, with Queen Elizabeth Forest Park lying within its bounds. There is also Glen Finglas near Brig-O-Turk, where the Woodland Trust is reintroducing native species.

Back on the route, it felt for a while like the road to nowhere, but we finally came out at a T-junction and took a right turn for the boat pier at Stronachlachar. This boasts a charming loch-side cafe where we ordered tea and enjoyed stunning views over the water.

Returning to the junction, we continued to head west for Inversnaid and its famous hotel, originally a 19th-century hunting lodge belonging to the Duke of Montrose.

This impressive building was later converted to a hotel serving the burgeoning tourist trade. Back then, steamships would bring guests up from Glasgow and beyond to visit the Trossachs. »



‘The route gradually narrows to single track, winding its way through remote wooded country’

The hotel still hosts visitors to the area and is a popular stopover for walkers on the WHW. We enjoyed some light refreshments in the oak-panelled bar before making the long drive back to Aberfoyle. From here, it was a short hop on faster roads to bring us to Balmaha after a great day exploring the park.

The following morning, we called at nearby Drymen. This historic village was once a waypoint on the famous Highland cattle droves, which once made their way to markets in the south.

The Clachan Inn here dates from 1734, and there are the remains of a medieval motte and bailey castle close by. Today, it serves the tourist trade and is a popular stopover on the WHW, where walkers can rest and stock up on supplies.

All too soon, it was time to make for home, but we had thoroughly enjoyed our time in the park. Through it all, the Land Rover had performed faultlessly, taking the hilly forest drives and faster roads in its stride.

Overall, I can wholeheartedly recommend a visit, although I would perhaps avoid the busier summer months. There is much to see and do here, and spring and autumn in the Highlands can be glorious. Just be aware of the special camping restrictions which require a permit for certain areas of the park.

Thankfully, there are plenty of regular campsites and accommodation available, but it's well worth booking ahead in peak tourist season. [CLR](#)

Mountains and Lochs

There are 21 Munros (mountains over 3,000ft or 914m) located within the park, including well-known peaks such as Ben More, Ben Lomond, and two mountains named Ben Vorlich. The Ben Vorlich near Loch Lomond has an elevation of 943m, while the one near Loch Earn stands at 985m.

In addition to the Munros, the park is home to many smaller Corbetts, which are mountains between 2,500ft (762m) and 3,000ft (914m).

Among these, Ben Arthur, also known as The Cobbler, is the most frequently climbed. The park also features 22 lochs, including the world-famous Loch Lomond and Scotland's only lake, the Lake of Menteith, located near Aberfoyle.



A couple of Land Rovers spotted near Aberfoyle



Tom Weir's Rest, a tranquil loch-side garden at Balamah

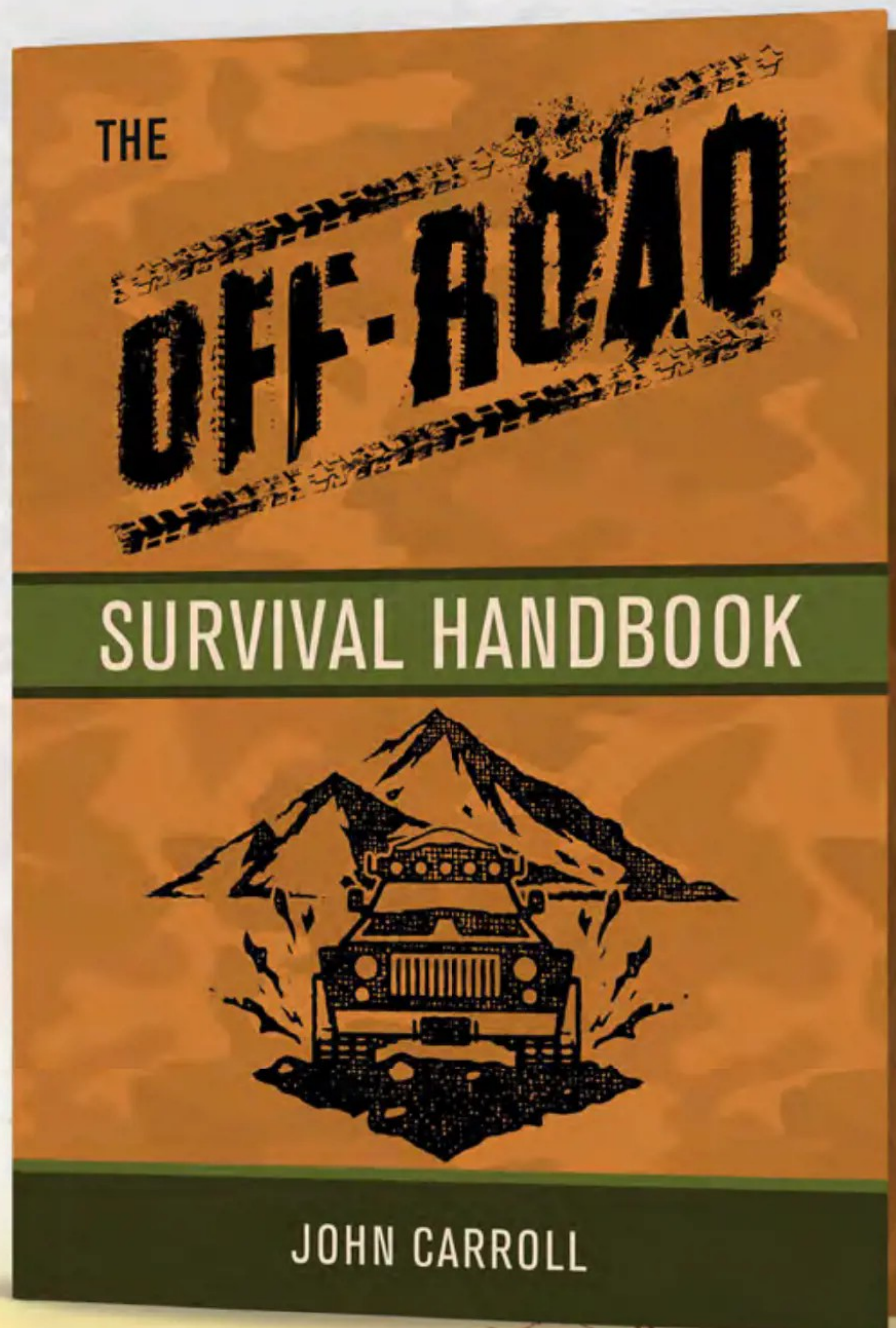
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Adam Barker in his modified 88in Series One

TENTH ANNIVERSARY TRIAL

The popular northern trial event known as the Patina National RTV reached a milestone this year

WORDS AND PICTURES **JOHN CARROLL**

This year's Patina National road taxed vehicle (RTV) trial was the 10th annual competitive one and attracted in the region of 45 drivers in leaf spring Land Rovers. The first Patina National was a wholly static gathering at the ALRC National at Eastnor Castle that attracted quite a few old triallers and their owners. In conversation, it became obvious that

people wanted to actually trial something. This was reinforced by Dave Harlow, who drove his 80in trialler from the finish of the National cross country vehicle (CCV) trial straight into the Patina line-up.

In order to make it a competitive event, one Saturday, a year later, Pennine LRC ran a leaf-sprung RTV as the precursor to its CCV the following day, and sorted out the

necessary Motorsport UK permits, etc.

It only attracted a few drivers and quite a few spectators, but there was enough to justify doing it again.

The plan at that point was to move it around each year and have different clubs host it. The following year, Yorkshire LROC ran the event at Helmsley in North Yorkshire.



This was one of a couple of Lightweights entered

The site was great, and there was a nice campsite. So it seemed that, in the manner of the Major's Trial always being at Eastnor Castle, the Patina National would be at Helmsley.

Having the same team organising it each year reduced the work required, and Yorkshire LROC made it into something special. The four things that made it worth attending were a good trials venue, a Saturday convoy from the campsite to the venue for competitors and spectators, a local and welcoming pub for socialising and finally a nice campsite. The last



One of several entered 88in Series IIAs seen on a section

‘Having the same team organising it each year reduced the work required’

two fostered a relaxed and sociable atmosphere, while the trial itself was tricky but not damaging, and classes were kept simple.

Before we knew it, the Patina National had become a feature in the annual trials calendar, and the organisers tried to avoid clashing with other established events.

The pre-trial drivers' briefing and post-trial prizegiving were friendly with lots of good-natured heckling, and the trial evolved into something of an inter-club competition.

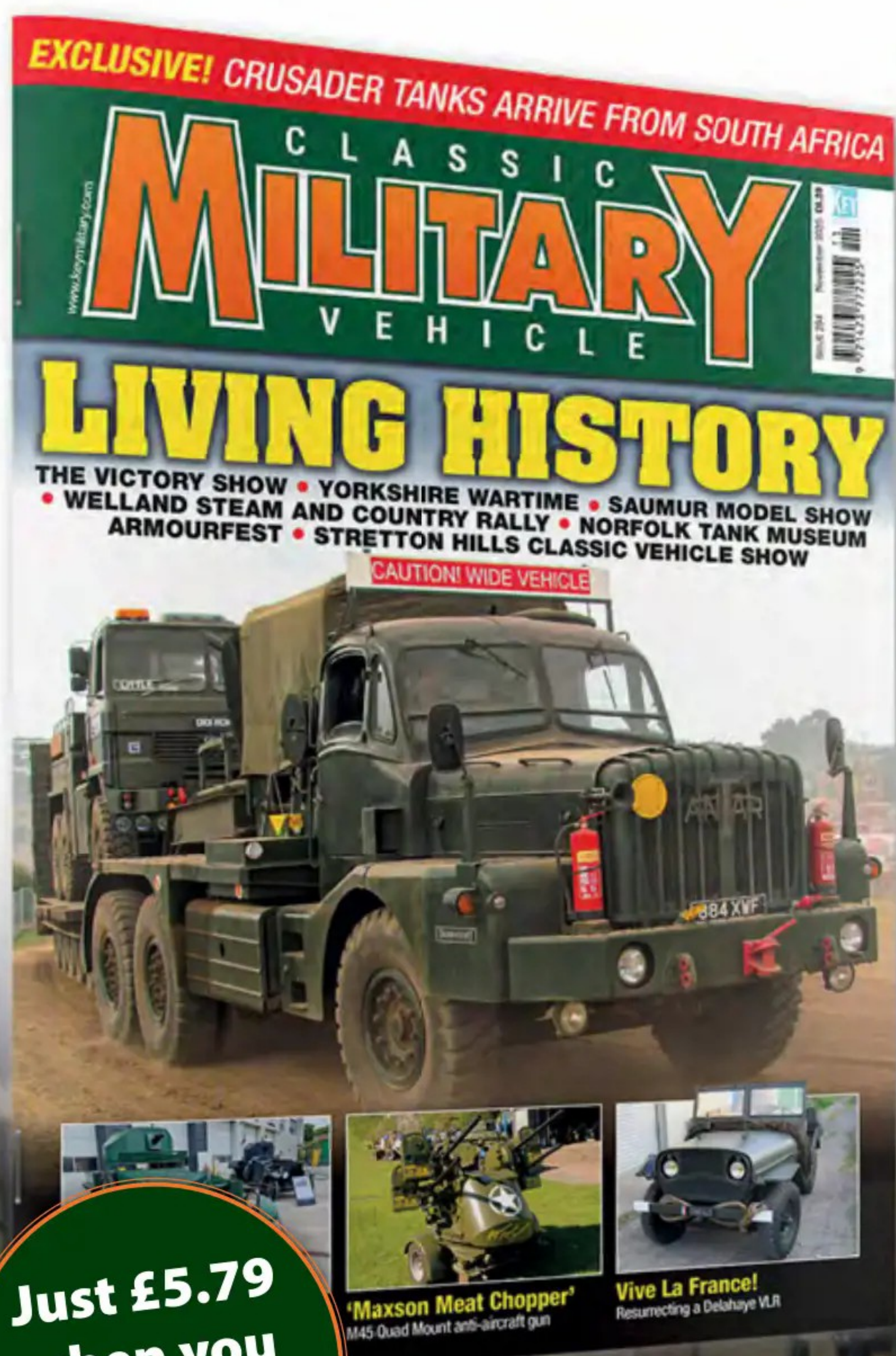
Early on, entries came from the Peak and Dukeries, Scottish and Essex Land Rover clubs. Then from the Pennine, Red Rose and Midland clubs. We were even lucky during lockdown, as the trial date fell in one of the windows when things were permitted. »



Rob Taylor's heavily modified 88in Series IIA

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If I had to pick one event that helped the Patina RTV take off, I'd say it was the lockdown. Because there was so little on at that time, the Patina got a good entry, and people enjoyed it, so they came back in subsequent years.

For 2025, a few changes were thrust upon the organisers; the size of the growing event concerned the landowner of the trial site, so a new venue had to be found.

The problem was that the event needed a suitable trials site and a nearby campsite so that the Saturday morning convoy could continue, while a local pub would of course be a welcome extra.

After a few conversations and a bit of searching by YLROC members, it was decided to go to the Crosshills site in Lothersdale near Keighley.

The trials site is well known to members of northern Land Rover and 4x4 clubs, as everyone seems to have trialled there at some point.

In a local village with two pubs was a campsite with a rally field, so, for the Patina National RTV, everything changed, but in reality, everything stayed the same.

On Friday, YLROC members set the trials sections out in two areas of the site, the hillside with a small and long disused quarry in its centre, as well as the flatter portion of the site at the top of the hillside.

When it came to Saturday's trial, some »

'The trials site is well known to members of northern Land Rover and 4x4 clubs'



Tom Marrion finished second in class in this 88in



Anjo Hoogendoorn came from Holland to enter the trial in this 80in



Toby Jefferson's Series One is prepared for trials and comp safaris

EVENT

felt that the sections here were harder than at the old site, but, realistically, they just seemed different because they were on new lumps and bumps.

As usual with a large entry, everyone was divided into groups and each started on different sections and worked their way around the 12 sections. This meant that the maximum penalty points that could be achieved were 144, and the minimum was zero.

Taking the 80in class as an example, 19 drivers in 80in Land Rovers and a couple of Willys Jeeps were entered.

The winner of the class and overall, Alistair Booker, scored just one point, while the tail ender scored 74.

The other classes were for longer wheelbase vehicles, especially 86/88in models and saw Charles Whittaker, a longstanding member of Midland ROC, take the win on nine points.

Andrew Bouw and Kyle Cooper won the modified classes for the same wheelbases, respectively. This year, there were no 107/109in vehicles entered.

At the exposed trials site, it seemed that autumn had arrived suddenly, and people were glad of the hats and scarves they'd remembered to bring as a cold wind blew all day.

Things were more sheltered on the campsite, but rain was threatening, so after the prize giving, plenty went back to the pub to eat and dissect the results. Conversation included comments like: "If I hadn't got that seven..." or, "You were lucky at that axle twister..." And, unsurprisingly, "Pint of Taylor's please."

Yes, it was a great weekend, alright, see you next year. **CLR**



The lunch break was taken in the lee of Land Rovers on such a windy day



A completely standard 86in Series is competitive with careful driving

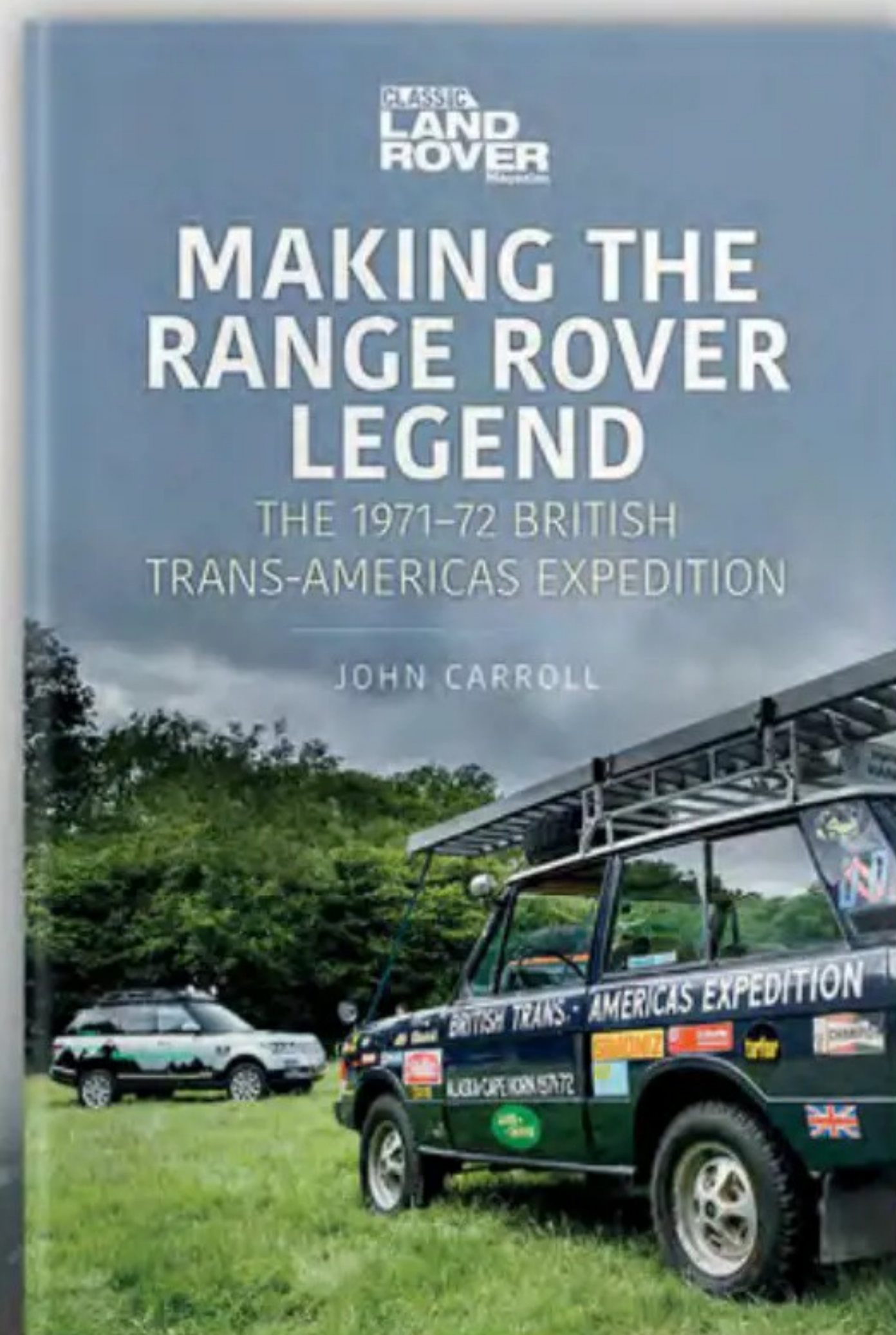
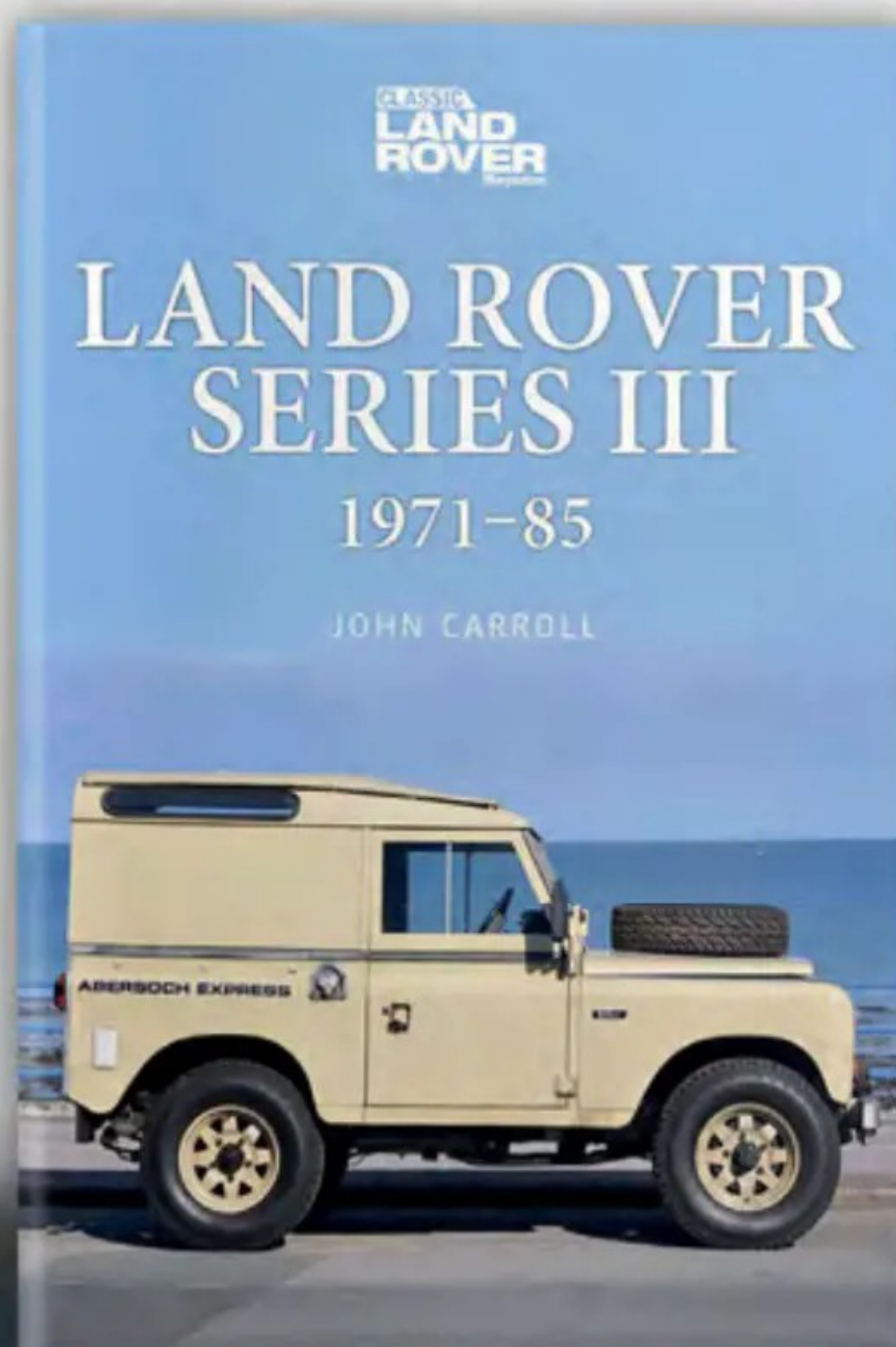
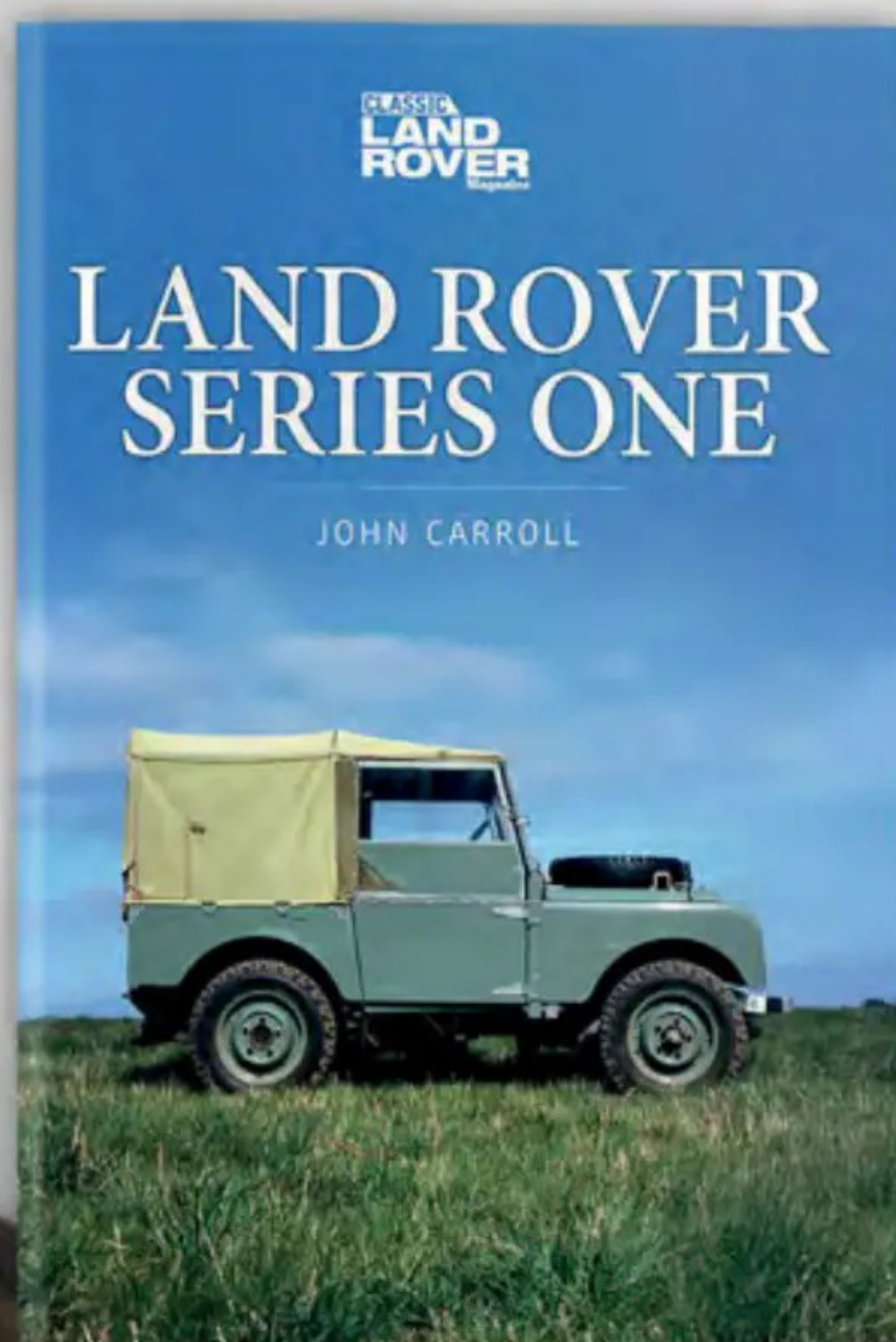


'Some felt that the sections here were harder than at the old site'

Julian Shoolheifer trailered this 80in from Essex so his sons could enter the trial

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The teams came together to build a log bridge using ropes, straps, wooden poles and a winch-equipped Defender

A EUROPEAN CHALLENGE

Friends **Tom Benson** and **Barney Netherwood** signed up for the gruelling multi-day 4D Challenge hosted by the Land Rover Club Holland

WORDS **TOM BENSON** PICTURES **NORBERT DUIJVELSHOFF**

It was a fairly innocuous YouTube search that led to the discovery of Land Rover Club Holland's (LRCH) 4D Challenge in 2019. But a combination of the clever recruitment video from the organisers and a burning desire to test the newly restored 1986 Ninety I had rebuilt, saw my friend Barney Netherwood and me hastily signing up to the event that was scheduled for May 2020.

The 4D is a multi-disciplinary adventure challenge that was due to take place in Holland and Belgium, run in partnership with the LRCH and ex-military PT personnel. Covering several days, it would test driving skill, endurance and physical fitness.

The recruitment video showed orienteering, kayaking, biking, running, problem solving and off-road driving tasks – harking back to the G4 challenge and

French and Belgian challenges that were ever so popular in the 1990s.

The event demanded that each team be self-sufficient with respect to carrying bikes, kit, camping equipment and food.

Sadly, COVID put to bed any notions of the challenge taking place in 2020. Somewhat generously, the organisers had offered all competitors the chance to defer until such a time as when restrictions would be lifted enough for the event to go ahead.

It was late 2021 before we were contacted to say that a proposed date of May 2022 had been agreed, and 21 teams of two competitors had confirmed entry.

THE PREPARATIONS

A few months before the scheduled start date, Barney and I were invited to a briefing at a Land Rover main dealership

in Holland, which would outline the requirements and full itinerary of the challenge.

As the only British competitors, the organisers kindly agreed to host a Zoom call for us so we could be given the full briefing details and information that would help with the final preparations.

We were told that there would be competitors from several European nations, and teams would consist of two competitors per vehicle: the only stipulation was that it was a Land Rover.

The briefing PowerPoint was shared with us, and the chief organiser advised us that the first challenge was working out where the start point of the competition would be.

He said that hidden somewhere within it was a clue to the location – we just had to work out what the clue was and where



On the first driving section Barney 'navigated' from inside the vehicle before realising that passengers could 'spot' from outside

'The competition would be going down to the last challenge'



The look of determination at the end of the of the competition after four long days



The last driving challenge of the competition: driving very slowly through deep water avoiding knocking the balls off the cane tops

it could signify.

Unfortunately for us, it was in Dutch, which presented the first difficulty. Luckily, one of Barney's colleagues is Dutch, and he offered to have a look and see if he could work out the clue.

He noticed that the use of the word Bouillon in the context of food items would not ordinarily be used, so he suggested that this may be the starting point location.

We didn't want to commit to Bouillon in case it was incorrect, as this would leave us at a disadvantage if we had significantly further to travel than other competitors, so we opted to stay at a more central campsite near Maastricht.

The night before the event, we received a video that showed footage of the location, but no name. But we were able to identify from the castle that Bouillon in the Ardennes region of Belgium was indeed correct.

»



DAY 1

On arrival at Bouillon castle, it was clear that the event would be run with the precision and expertise expected of military personnel – regular briefings and little to no downtime over the next four days.

Nevertheless, we were excited about the variety of tasks we'd be faced with; starting with a stiff run from the castle ramparts, down to the river, across it or through it and up a very steep valley side.

At the summit, we were then given our instructions for the challenge ahead. We were to undertake a three-hour kayak downriver, including navigational scatter, before ditching the boat, running back across country to the castle via various checkpoints and then collecting our mountain bikes for a further navigational challenge.

This was then compounded by a treasure hunt around Bouillon Castle and town, where we were tasked with collecting as many punches on a card as possible within the 45-minute timeframe.

One of the organisers, who translated all the briefings into English for us, advised that the key to many of the challenges would be getting back to the start point within the allocated timeframe, as the

penalties for being late would be worse than missing punches.

A combination of lack of experience and relatively limited topographical knowledge meant that we miscalculated timings on the first few tasks and arrived back later than anticipated, leaving us lagging on the scoreboard from the start.

Our next destination was Charleroi – a mere two hours away. The driving element was just as crucial as the physical aspect, and with long road stretches looming, having a vehicle with decent range would help with making timely progress.

The Ninety is a comfortable cruiser, and it ate the miles up effortlessly, depositing us in Charleroi within the allotted time. Our entry onto the country estate was wonderfully dramatic, encompassing enchanting forest tracks and a tricky river crossing.

Another briefing prepared us for the evening task, which would be a whole-team challenge to build a bridge across the river using logs, winches and whatever equipment we had within the vehicles.

This task didn't pit us against each other; rather, it was a canny way of building the camaraderie that was essential to the success of the event over the next few days.



In a sporting spirit, the other competitors chose to switch to their non-native English for this task, allowing us both to contribute and feel included in the activities.

We toiled well into the darkness with several team members up to their chests in the river, creating a sturdy 10m-long bridge. Once this was completed, we were treated to a pre-bed briefing.

DAY 2

Day two would be largely trials sections, testing driving ability and vehicle capability in a series of tasks that were not dissimilar to British trialling.





Picking a way through the rocks to exit the quarry



The sole leaf sprung entrant which was given additional time to travel between locations

There were, however, a few key distinctions; namely, the passenger was encouraged to remain outside the vehicle as a 'spotter' – this essential bit of information had somehow become lost in translation and was only discovered by us after the first section had been completed.

While most of the other competitors were very athletic and had prepared for the physical demands of the challenges, few of them were used to or experienced in trialling vehicles.

This is largely due to the restrictive nature of land use in Belgium, Germany and Holland. Most of the vehicles were very standard, ranging from a long wheelbase Series III through classic Defenders, Discovery 1, 2 and 3s right the way up to brand new Defenders and Discoverys.

We also learnt that in Holland, taxation of Land Rovers is high, and this further contributed to the relative lack of trialling as a hobby over there.

Having trialled for the better part of 20 years, this aspect of the 4D challenge was one we relished. The sections consisted of a series of gates made from poles, with ping-pong balls standing atop.

Penalty points were accrued for knocking the balls off the poles, reversing to manoeuvre within the course or ceasing forward motion for more than a few seconds. Unlike UK trials, each vehicle had to complete the entire section, and points were totted up at the end.

One standout section involved stopping the Land Rover at the top of an almost vertical incline, attaching a rope to the rear recovery point and then wrapping the rope around a nearby tree.

The passenger, or 'spotter', then lowered the vehicle down the slope in a controlled fashion by increasing or decreasing the pressure on the rope, much like a capstan winch action. Once at the bottom, the rope was removed and the driving section

continued down the ravine.

As the evening drew in, we were exhausted from two days of activity and looking forward to a little downtime to recover. The organisers had other plans for us all, with another briefing called and us all tasked with the challenge of finishing the bridge from the previous night.

DAY 3

We had fared pretty well in the previous day's driving challenges, and this had lifted us up the leaderboard to a more modest middle of the pack. Briefings outlined the plan for day three, which would begin with a two-hour navigational scatter in the spring rain and had to be done by mountain bike.

This time, we felt better prepared and plotted out a route which would hopefully allow us to gain as many points as possible by hitting checkpoints on the map, but also arrive back at base within the allotted timeframe.

»

EVENT

Sadly, our winning plan was undone by a locked gate, meaning we had to backtrack to gain entry to the estate. We weren't the only team to fall foul of this obstruction, but the late penalty didn't do us any favours.

This was followed by further trials sections in the Ninety, which showcased the best that the woodland had to offer: trails, gulleys, river crossings, mud and steep climbs.

It was great fun. With the morning activities completed, we were called to yet another briefing, ready for the challenges of the afternoon; first up was a log chop, which consisted of each team of two being given an axe and a log, which was to be chopped into two pieces as quickly as possible, and then carried on a 1km trail run.

A last-minute bit of chopping technique advice greatly assisted our endeavour, and we were able to finish the log chop first. This was followed by some abseiling and cave climbing.

Fairly sure we had completed a full day's worth of activities; the next briefing exposed our naivety as we were given the address for the location of the final day's challenges – a two-hour drive away in Oisterwijk.

We were given a set amount of time to pack up and drive to the next location, with a briefing called



Fresh faces at the start line

for shortly after that.

Having arrived at Oisterwijk and set up camp, we learned there would be a night challenge starting at 10pm, consisting of a run, bike, run physical challenge that would last for the next four hours.

This was another navigational scatter, and we were only allowed one bike per team, so we were required to swap between running and cycling while navigating in the pitch dark, freezing night.

Arriving back at the campsite in the early hours, exhausted and exhilarated, we crawled into the tent, riding the high of the last few days and wondering what the final day would hold for us. The third day had propelled us further up the leaderboard, and we were currently sitting in the top three.

DAY 4

Day four began with a one-hour running navigational scatter around a local woodland recreational area. By now, we

were well versed in efficiently plotting our targets and planning a route which would gain as many points as possible while ensuring we returned to base on time.

This led us to the last two driving sections of the event, and likely where the competition would be decided; each task was weighted differently, and the driving sections were heavier than many of the physical tasks.

One section started with a large, stinking mudhole. Once the first team had got through on their second attempt, it was clear that subsequent cars would struggle.

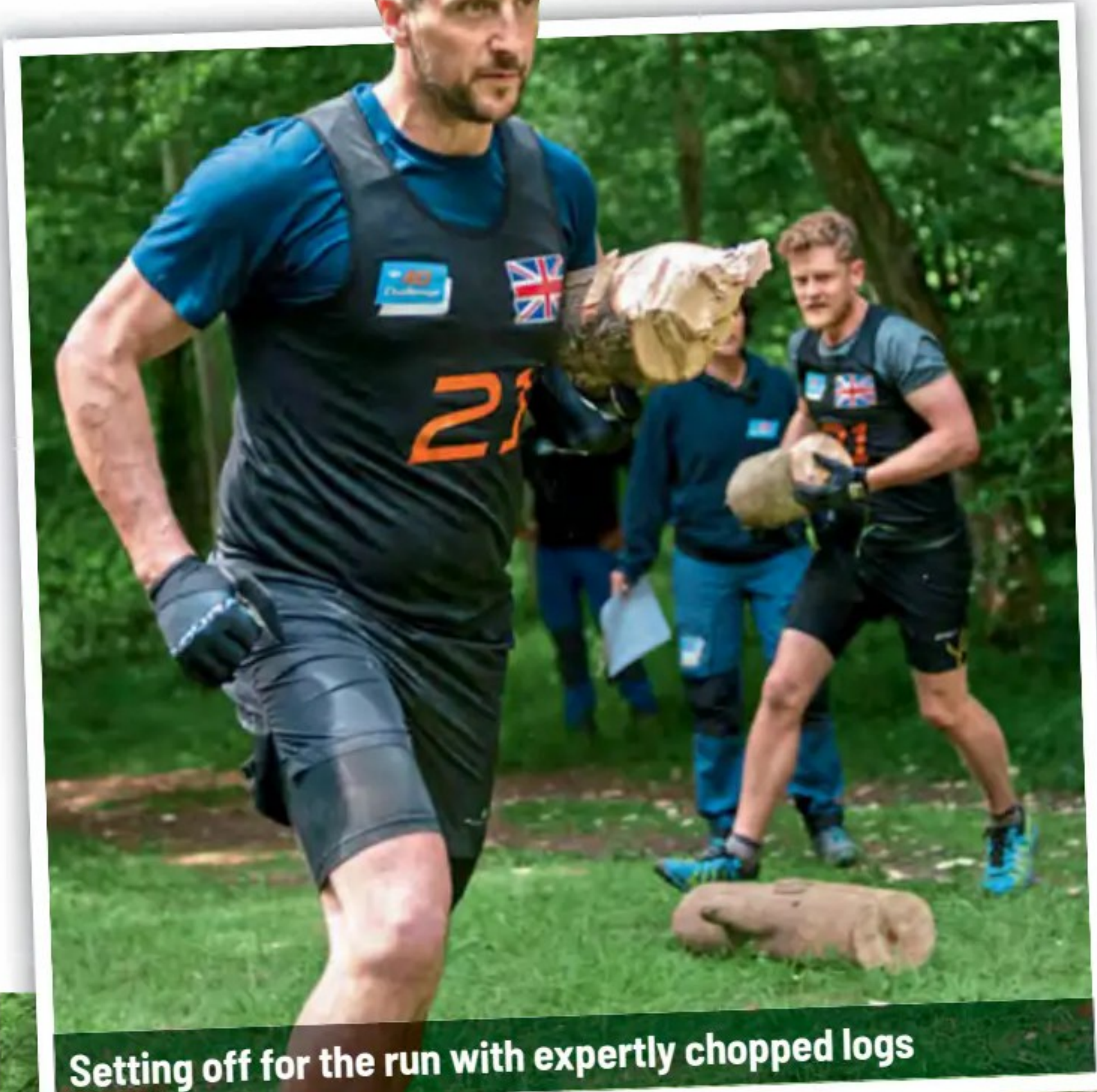
Several teams enjoyed ploughing through, and the inevitable winch recovery was an entertaining spectacle. We calculated that the penalty for bypassing the mudhole wouldn't be any worse than having to be recovered from its depths, and we had a very long drive home, so we opted to take the higher route.

The final gate of the section was right in the middle of a lake. Bearing in mind that if we knocked the ping-pong balls off the poles, one of us was wading in to retrieve them, we set off.

I had never driven so slowly through deep water, and had we not had a snorkel fitted to the Ninety, the vehicle wouldn't have made it without drowning. Going any faster was not an option, as any further speed would have created a bow wave, which would have then knocked off the ping-pong balls.

There was complete silence in the cab as we edged forwards, knowing full well that we could fail at the last minute as the exhaust tail pipe bubbled past the gates. We made it to dry land with no points scored and an opportunity to drain the lake out of our footwells. The competition would be going down to the last challenge.

The final task was an assault course – and the final standings could still be affected by how each team fared. Two teams at a time had to race around a course of approximately 1km, entailing overhead swinging ropes, tunnels to crawl through, rope swings across rivers and bodies of



Setting off for the run with expertly chopped logs



Team 13 in their V8 110 eye up their exit from a riverbed

There were several water crossings for the Land Rovers and the competitors



'It was clear that the event would be run with the precision and expertise expected of military personnel'



A welcome rest as Barney and Tom wait their turn for the final driving section of the competition



Part of the challenge on day 1 involved paddling down the Semois from Bouillon while hitting check points on route before running across country back to Bouillon Castle



Barney points the way to the next checkpoint during the night time run-bike-run competition

water to cross.

If any part of the course wasn't completed by one member of the team, then they had to either have another attempt at it or face a penalty. Speed and a certain amount of fearlessness were needed on this section. With adrenaline still running high from the driving sections, we had nothing to lose so it was full steam ahead as we ran the assault course.

With all tasks completed, it was a tense wait for the results of the last few challenges to come in. Either way, the experience had been superb, and we had both enjoyed the variety of tasks that the event had offered.

The LRCH guys had delivered an event that hadn't just been a great experience, but they'd made us feel very welcome and run it incredibly

smoothly over the four days.

As the results board was displayed, Barney and I were surprised to find that we hadn't just cemented a position on the podium for the overall event, we'd finished first.

The sense of camaraderie and collaboration that typifies much of the Land Rover community was evident in the way our success was received by all the other competitors – we certainly felt, come the end of the experience, that we were leaving with friends who we'd keep in touch with for years to come.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, 2024's event was postponed, but an email received in December last year said that there are plans for the 4D to run again in 2026. Barney and I are already contemplating which vehicle to compete in. **CLR**

DEFENDER

Martin and his veteran
ex-Army 110 Land Rover



EX-MILITARY WORKHORSE

Craig Allen on a former British Army 110 that has enjoyed a second life as a runabout and load lugger

WORDS AND PICTURES **CRAIG ALLEN**

I drove military Land Rovers for decades in my army days, and still have a soft spot for these rugged vehicles. So when I spotted an ex-British Army 110 at a retail park here in Edinburgh, I went over to take a closer look.

Resplendent in several layers of peeling NATO green and black paint, and topped with a classic Brownchurch roof-rack, it was obviously a working truck. It also appeared to retain most of its military features.

There was no sign of the driver, so I left my card on the windscreen in the hope that the owner might get back to me.

It turned out the Land Rover belonged to retiree Martin Fraser, who was more



The original anaemic N/A 12J Diesel has been replaced with a 200Tdi



The civilian pattern steel wheels are shod with Yokohama All-Terrains

long-serving Series III 109s, and I had driven countless miles in these basic army trucks.

The previous owner had spent some years living in the South of France, which explained the lack of rust on the chassis and bulkhead. The truck had obviously been modified over the years and had been fitted with a 200Tdi at some point.

This is a common modification as the military pattern N/A 12J diesel is no ball of fire, and a Tdi improves both performance and overall driveability. It did, however, come with the original doors, panels and interior fittings.

The wagon was fitted with a classic Brownchurch galvanised roof rack, which is a handy accessory. The rear load area, meanwhile, was protected from heavy tools and building materials by a chipboard false floor.

Martin is a retired electrical engineer, and the Land Rover gets used for his various DIY projects. He was told by the previous owner that this Land Rover was a former helicopter support vehicle.

This may well be true, as the military »



An adjustable tow hitch has replaced the NATO pattern originally fitted

than happy to meet up for a chat so I could learn more about his prized Land Rover.

What he had was an ex-military 1991 110 fitted for radio (FFR) as identified by the manufacturer's plate on the seat box: a Land Rover I was very familiar with.

These wagons took over from the

'It turned out the Land Rover belonged to retiree Martin Fraser'



The Land Rover has mismatched doors, roof and bonnet, but Martin still has the originals



A heli-support Land Rover complete with its special roof-mounted bracket MOD

has operated a combined RAF/army helicopter support squadron since the 1980s. However, it is not one of the small number of Land Rovers that were specially converted for the role. These 110s were fitted with additional equipment to 'jump start' helicopters and featured a hard back with a special platform mounted on the roof.

Further research using the original army number plate might throw more light on this. What Martin has is basically a standard FFR 110, albeit a winterised version. These were fitted with heating panels in the rear load area and extra warm air ducting in the cab.

This supports something he was told about the Land Rover having spent time overseas. Given the cold weather adaptations, it most probably served on deployments to Norway.

The truck has obviously been further modified over the years and has been fitted with a civilian pattern Station Wagon roof and plain bonnet. Slide opening windows have also been added to the rear van sides to improve all-around visibility.

Martin has the original roof, bonnet and doors tucked away safely in his shed. This means he could return the vehicle to its original military FFR spec at some time in the future, if he so wishes.

He already attends shows and events with his other classic, a 1970s MGB, so who knows, this truck might eventually make it onto the show circuit. In the meantime, this ex-army 110 provides Martin with a handy runabout and work truck. Many of these ex-military



The sticker says it all!

workhorses have found second lives as enthusiast vehicles.

Cheap to run and easy to maintain, they can make an affordable entry into classic Land Rover ownership. With proposals now out for the army's light vehicle replacement, we can expect to see many more military Land Rovers becoming available sometime in the near future. CLR



The interior has been lined to reduce noise and condensation

Helicopter support Land Rovers

The Joint Helicopter Support Unit (JHSU) was formed in the wake of the Falklands War and combined both army and RAF personnel.

The soldiers came from several different corps, including the RLC, REME and Royal Engineers.

The squadron used Land Rovers for ground handling and helicopter support from its inception back in 1982. Originally, these were Series III models, which were later replaced by Defender 110s.

Some of these Land Rovers were specially modified with a distinctive roof-mounted bracket and special equipment for jump-starting helicopters.

The unit also used GS models for transporting stores and personnel. Fitted for radio models were used for communication, and it would appear that Martin's example is one of these.

It could equally be a vehicle originally employed by one of the RAF or Army Air Corps helicopter squadrons. The JHSU was renamed the Joint Helicopter Support Squadron in 2009 and still uses Land Rovers to support its operations.

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As it came back from Taylor's Paintworks – the roof skin gleaming in Davos White with the roof rails and sunroofs refitted

TOPPING OUT CEREMONY

In this month's G-WAC Discovery update, the G-WAC returns from painting, and Emrys turns his attention to the shell fixtures and fittings

WORDS AND PICTURES **EMRYS KIRBY**



EMRYS KIRBY

DIFFICULTY: ● ●

TIME ALLOWED: 2 DAYS

In the last update, I shared the process of painting the shell at Taylor's Paintworks, and while it was away, I turned my attention to cleaning and preparing the interior to refit it when the vehicle came back.

Well, the ugly duckling has returned to me, and it really is turning into a beautiful swan. The roof is gleaming in Davos White, the door jambs and anything that could possibly show when the panels are back on have been beautifully painted, and the A-pillars are finished in satin black.

The sunroof frames and the roof rails have been bare metal and finished in satin black and refitted. It's all looking very positive, but now the tricky work of fitting the shell out starts; finding, assessing and cleaning all the components I removed and stored back in November 2023.

To ensure a comprehensive factory fresh paint job, we removed absolutely every little fixing, sticker, plate, switch, fitting,

packing piece and plastic trim.

It's hard to keep track of these and to remember their exact location and orientation. I take multiple photos every time I do any work, so it was exceptionally useful to look back on these.

In addition, I bought a complete spare shell with my friend Charles Whitaker, and this has been invaluable for small fixtures and fittings as well as checking small details.

As can be expected on a 36-year-old vehicle, a lot of plastic and rubber components have gone brittle and have started to perish. I have gathered a reasonable stack of secondhand parts, and when new parts are not readily available, I have to choose the best of the bunch and make it go again.

This was the case with the gutter rails, some of the door light switches and some of the E number stickers on the slam panel. I'm in two minds about

window rubbers – new rubber seals are often very hard to fit, and after having problems, I decided to reuse the original, but cracked, Alpine window seals, and see how they go.

As I work on vehicle restorations on my own in my spare time, I was very grateful to Wayne Taylor for fitting the sunroofs and headlining, as both would be very challenging to do solo.

The next task will be to turn my attention to getting the interior fitted while I wait for more panels to be painted. Again, the spare shell will be invaluable as I will inevitably find small broken components. I will, of course, be keeping anything that is date-stamped or unique to this little piece of Land Rover history.

As always, thanks to Britpart and Mirka for their kind support in bringing 482 back to life. **CLR**



1 The roof rails were removed, stripped to bare metal, primed and painted in satin black



2 I was glad not to have to fit the sunroofs, they look like an absolute pain to do, especially on your own



3 The all-important VIN plate riveted back onto the slam panel



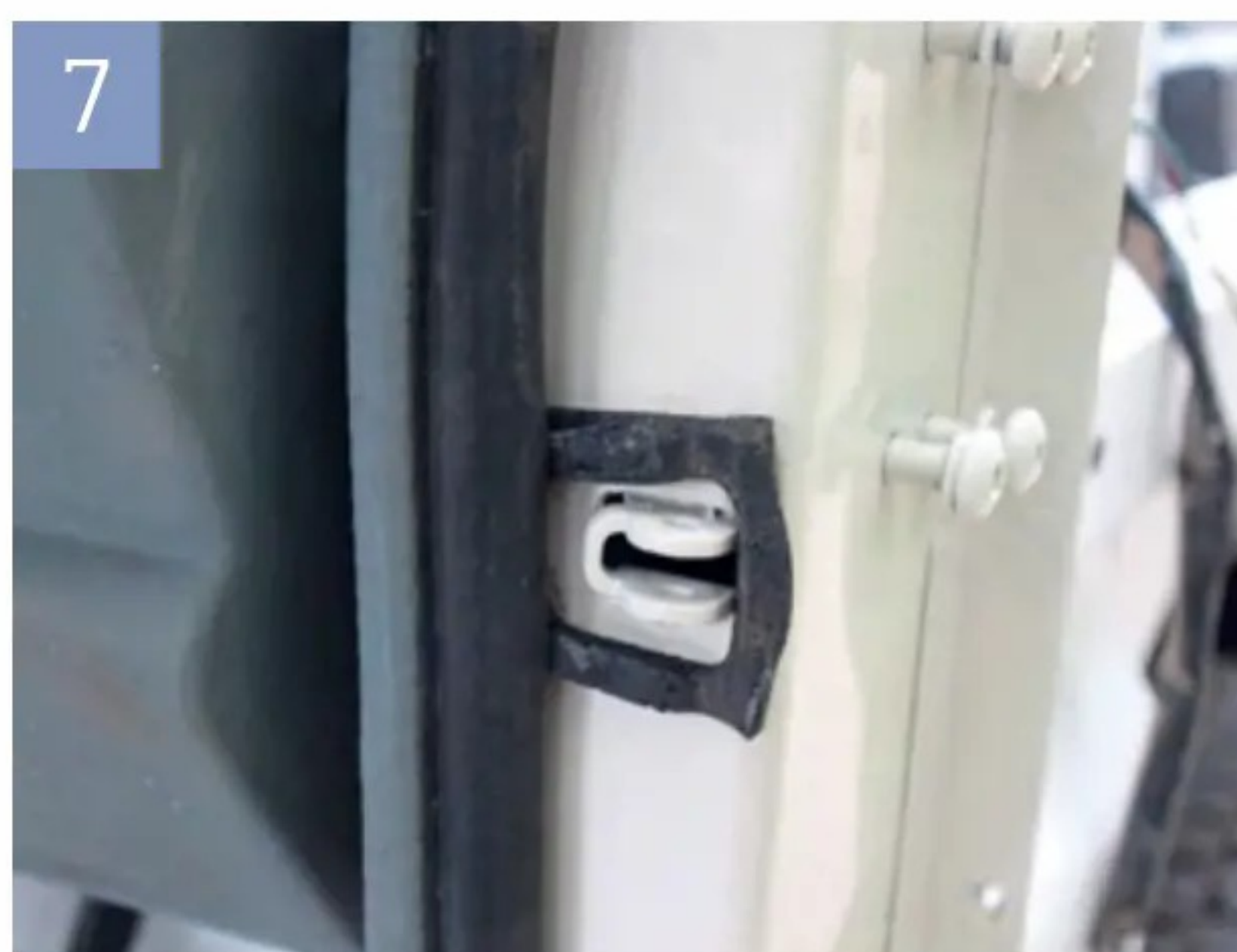
4 Wayne and Stuart refitted the roof lining – another job that would have been a challenge on my own



5 The door jambs have been bare metalled and beautifully repainted, including the hinge bolts, as is correct on these vehicles – evidence suggests the shell was painted with the hinges already on



6 We removed all the door catches, fixtures and fittings, and these can now go back on



7 We managed to reuse the small foam rubber seals that go around the door limit brace – a nice little detail



8 Door light switch refitted with new screw – again, we chose the best of the bunch



9 Refitting the alpine roof lights. After struggling with new rubbers, I decided to refit the originals, and we'll see how we get on – they didn't leak before – will they now?



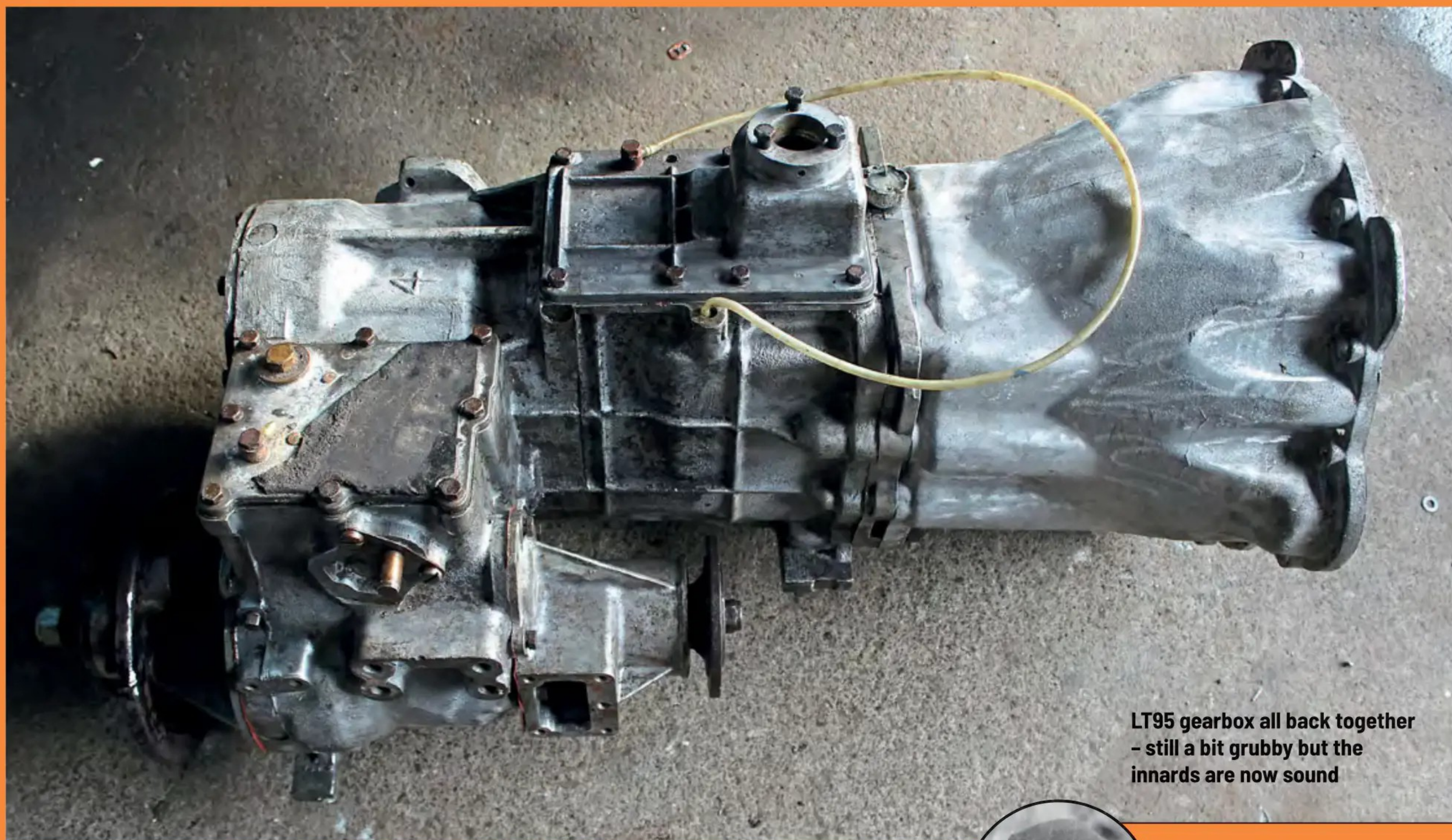
10 I refitted the plastic gutter trims into the beautifully resealed gutters. Again, I chose the best of the bunch as they're very prone to breaking



11 I managed to reuse most of the original E stickers, and for those that were damaged, I managed to get good replacements from the spare shell. I carefully matched their exact location to a before photo.



12 This is what I'll be reporting on next month – refitting the lovely Sonar Blue interior



LT95 gearbox all back together – still a bit grubby but the innards are now sound

GEARING UP

Emrys Kirby builds up a gearbox and checks over the propshafts

WORDS AND PICTURES **EMRYS KIRBY**

In last month's issue, I covered restoring the wiring loom and some of the interior trim. While I could have bought new or fitted good used items, I still maintain that the only way to do this rare vehicle justice is to retain and restore as much of the original vehicle as possible. This takes much longer than other options – but my time is my own and free!

One of the components that wasn't original to the vehicle is the gearbox. Unfortunately, the original LT95 gearbox went missing during its time on Anglesey, but when I bought the vehicle from Williams Classics, a gearbox and donor engine were included. Both had been left outside for many years, and while the engine had succumbed to the elements and was only useful for parts, the gearbox seemed to have fared better with minimal water ingress. In addition and in anticipation of buying VRW one day, I'd bought another Stage 1 LT95 via eBay back in 2021. Again, this was an unknown quantity, and it had come out of a scrap vehicle that had sat under a tree in the Lake District for years. It was grubby, but it turned over ok and hadn't had any water ingress. Unfortunately, it had been fitted to a diesel engine, and the

bellhousing had been cut to clear the starter motor.

The LT95 is known to be a very robust box, but parts are rare and very expensive. While the gearbox was fitted to the Range Rover and the Stage 1, a genuine Stage 1 box has lower transfer gear ratios as well as a larger front output to mate to the larger double cardan front propshaft. They also have a different serial number beginning 88**, whereas the Range Rover box typically has a 355** number.

I was reasonably hopeful that I could make a decent box out of the two – once I'd given both of them a good clean off. For some reason, the LT95 is prone to surface corrosion, and where oil leaks out, they're prone to getting caked in sticky gunk. Once in the first box, I discovered that there had been more water ingress than I had first thought, and a couple of mainshaft gears had rust pitting. I then opened up the second box, and thankfully, it looked to be in excellent condition, except for the fact that the centre differential had been stripped down and welded up. In addition, the transfer gears had been replaced with the highest available ratio combination, no doubt fitted to make



EMRYS KIRBY

DIFFICULTY: ● ● ●

TIME ALLOWED:
APPROXIMATELY THREE DAYS

COST: N/A

the most of the diesel engine it had been mated to. And of course, it had a modified bellhousing. While it would mean a significant strip-down and rebuild, I discovered I could gather sufficient good parts from both boxes to build a good one with little more than the cost of new seals and gaskets.

I've seldom worked on the LT95 box, but there's nothing overly complicated about it. The main gearbox and transfer box are contained within the same casing, and this means they are heavy and rather unwieldy. After a couple of days' work stripping, cleaning, assessing and reassembling with the best parts, I now have a gearbox good enough to fit to the replacement engine – a job for next month's update. [CLR](#)

'The LT95 is known to be a very robust box, but parts are rare and very expensive'



1
VRW's original gearbox had been removed a few years ago – a shame to lose the original



2
I managed to get two correct Stage 1 gearboxes hoping I could make a good one from the two



3
Looking down to one of the filthy diff lock vacuums – the casings are really prone to caked-on grime



4
One of the bottom covers off – transfer gears were in great condition in both boxes



5
I stripped both boxes down to this level to make a full assessment



6
One of the bell housings had been cut to accommodate a diesel engine



7
The other bellhousing cleaned up fine so could be used



8
On close inspection, one of the main boxes had corrosion to the teeth on first and second gear



9
The interior of the other box was really clean so that became the main box of choice



10
Layshaft out to inspect thoroughly and it was fine



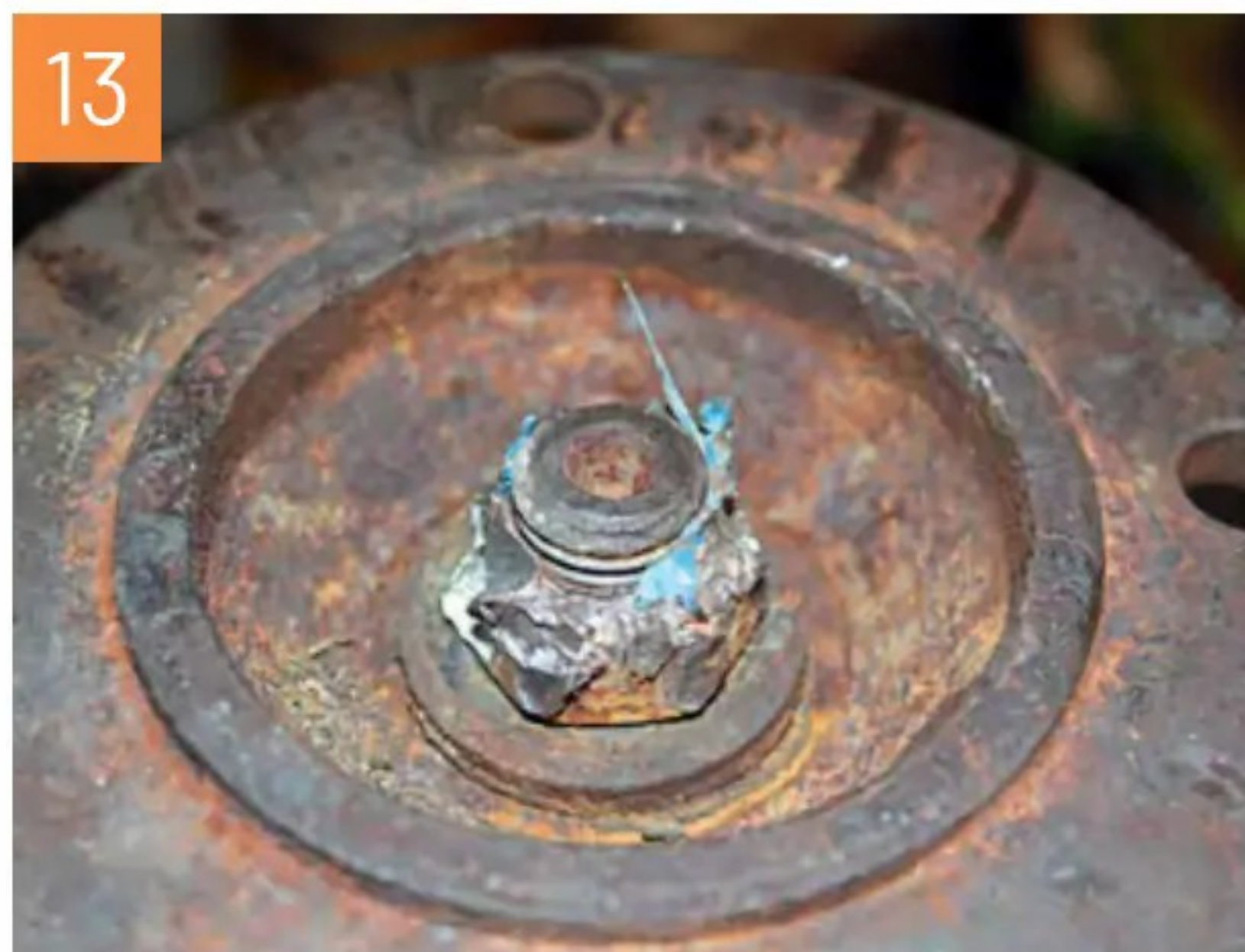
11
The primary pinion and front layshaft bearing sit in a front closure plate – a better design to the old LT76 in my opinion



12
I chose the best of the two primary pinion bearings – one was slightly rough



13



A right pain – the nut on the front output was seized and I had to chisel it off.

14



Using a puller to remove the front output flange – it was on tight

15



And of course there was corrosion round where the seal runs

16



After a good clean up with a strip of emery cloth the sealing surface came up well – I do this a lot to good effect

17



Front output housing stripped and cleaned ready for a new seal

18



I used the best front output bearing and fitted a new seal – it turns smoothly and quietly

19



The centre diff just removed from the gearbox that was connected to the diesel engine

20



For some reason the diff had been dismantled and the gears welded up so it was scrap

21



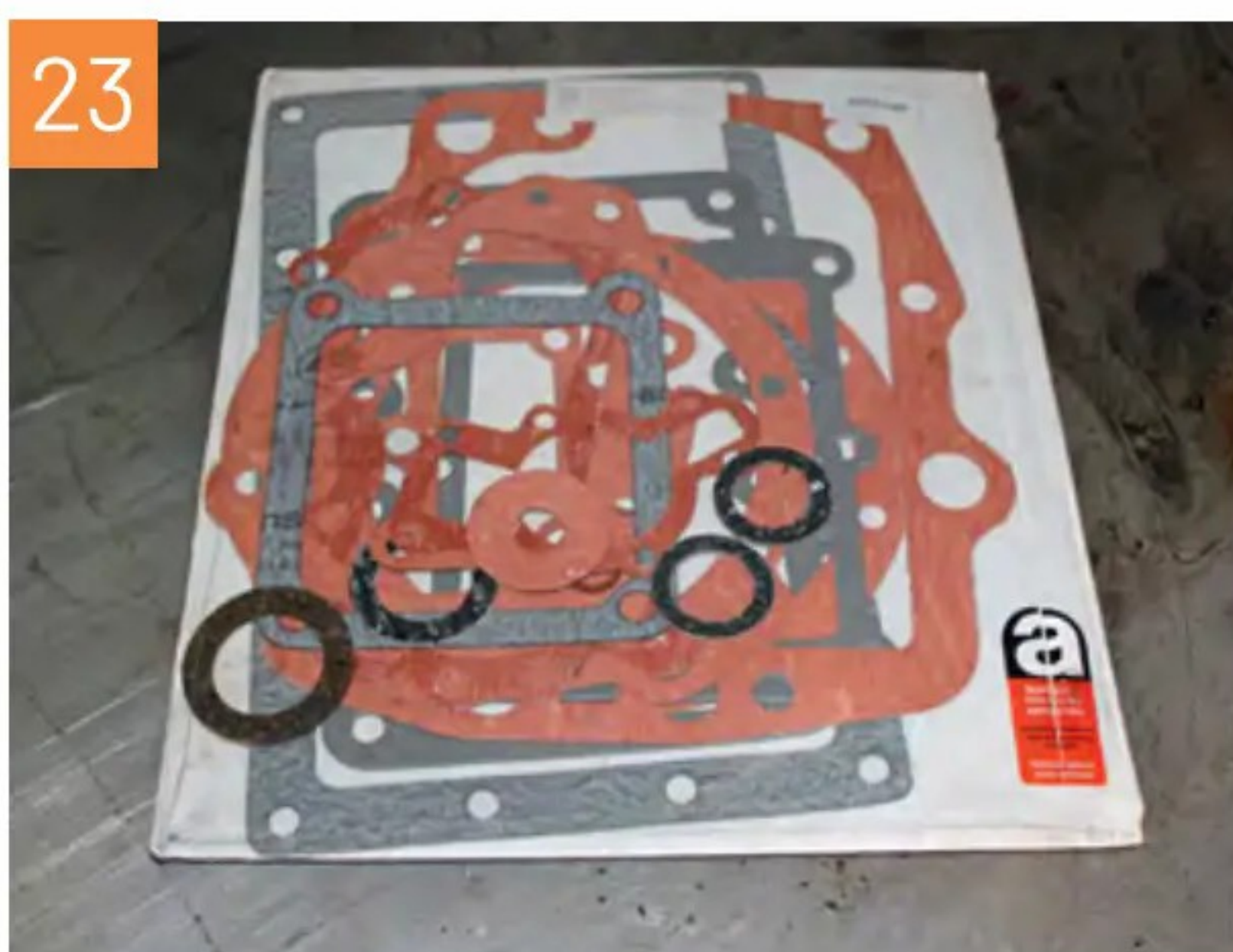
The diesel box had also been fitted with the highest ratio transfer gears – high ratio on the left, standard Stage 1 on the right – I fitted the correct Stage 1 pairing

22



The good centre diff going in using the best of the bearing sets

23

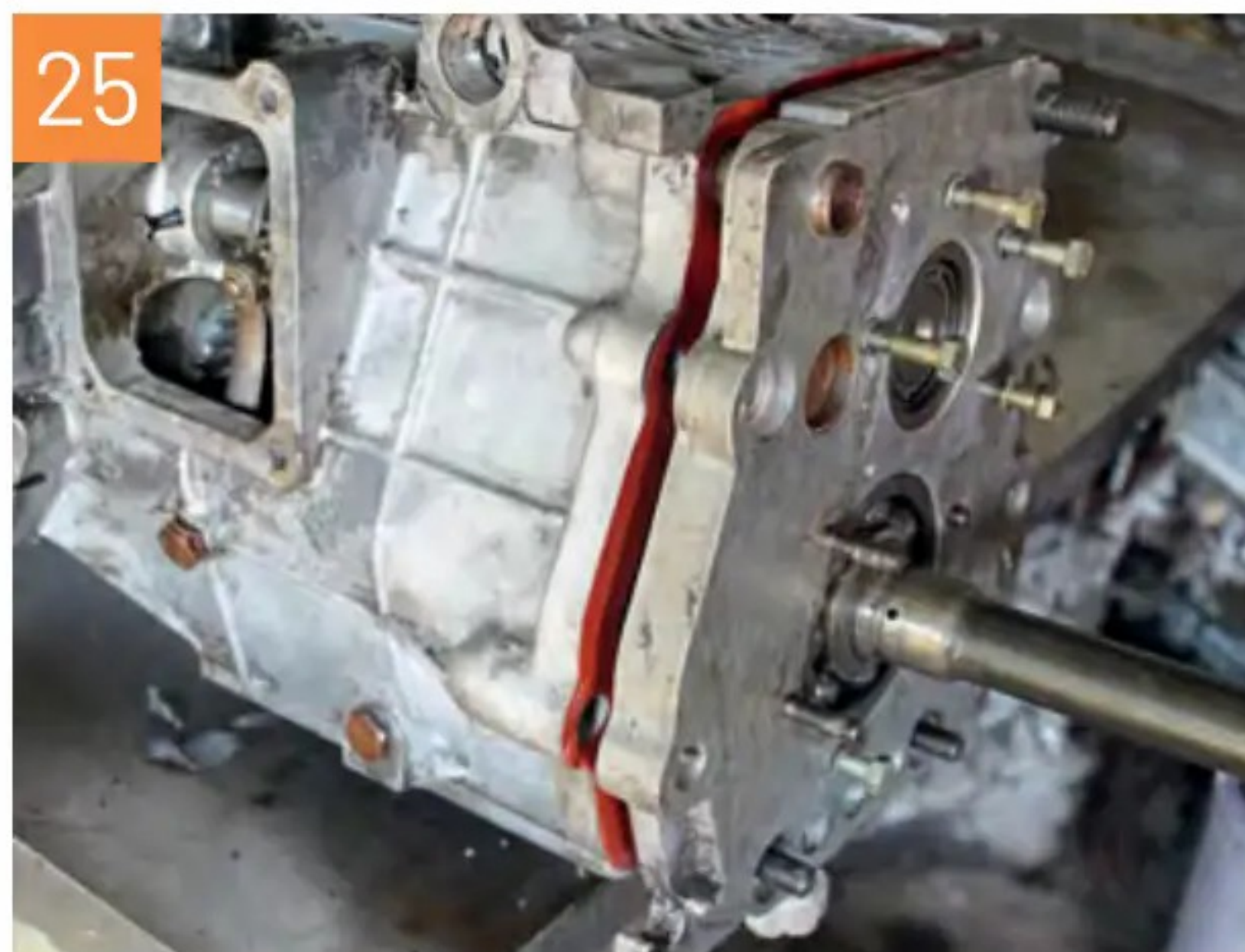


I got a NOS gasket set – note it contains asbestos so care should always be taken when removing old gaskets – I soak them in kerosene so they scrape off and don't release dust

24



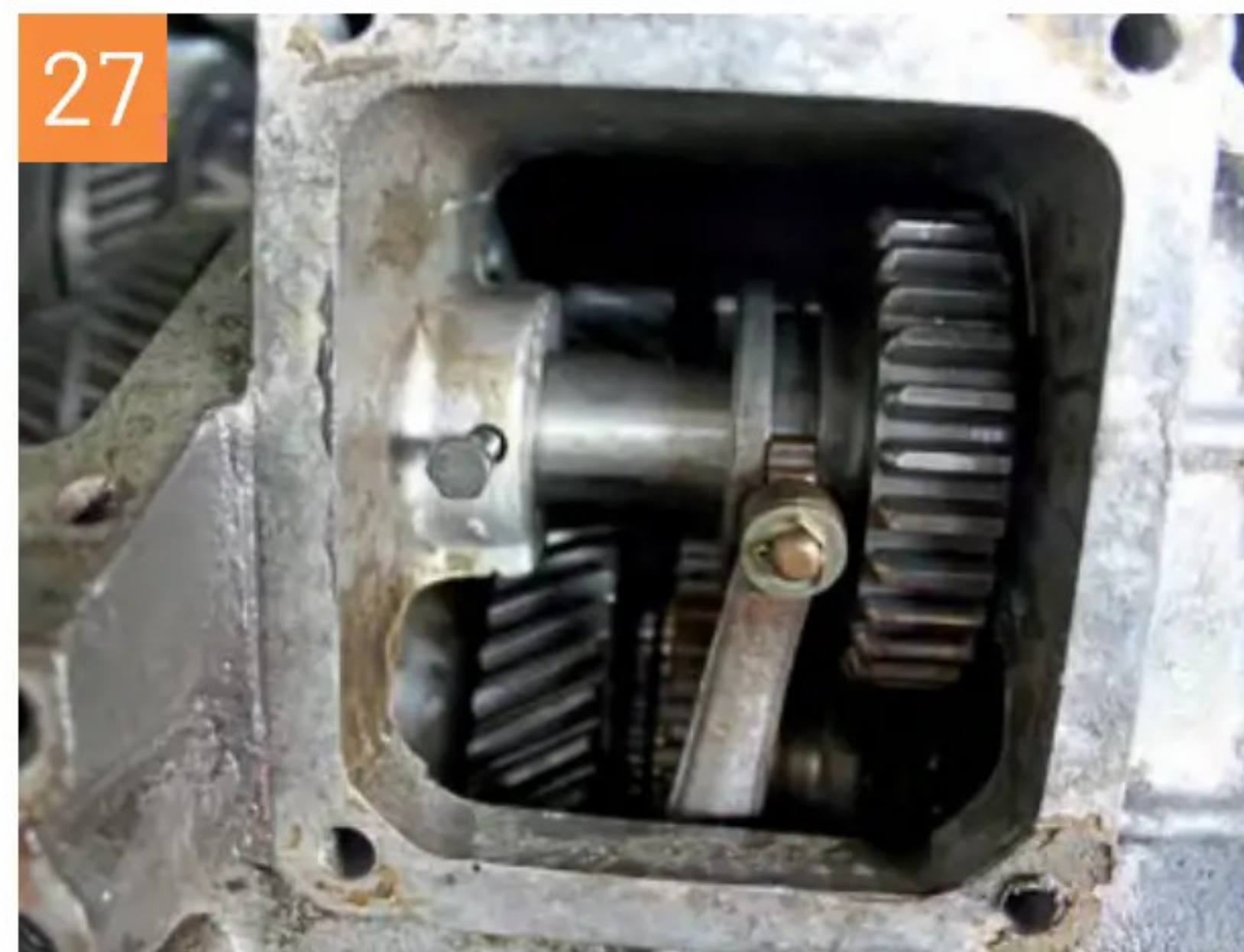
Rear output and handbrake backing plate refitted closing off the rear of the box



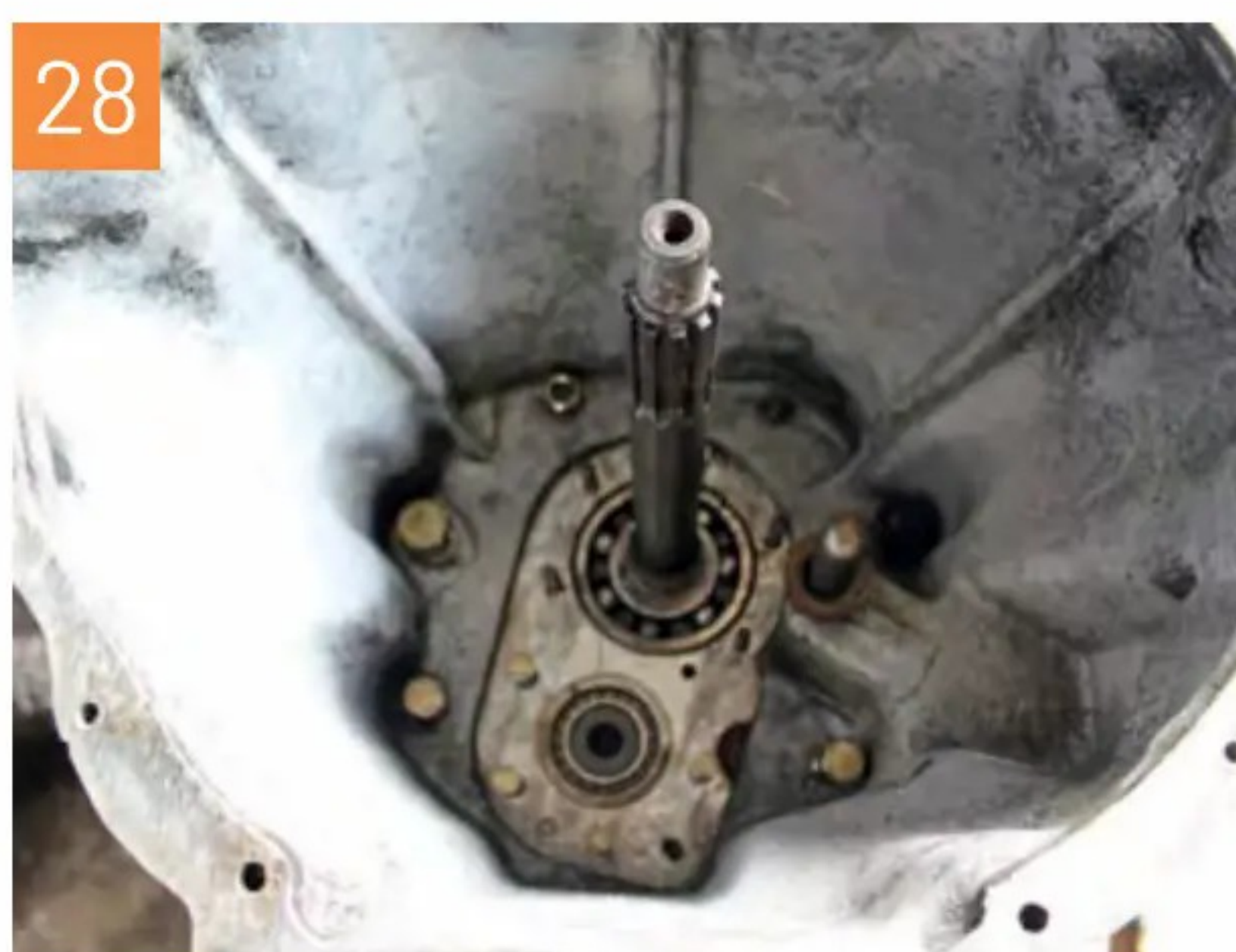
25 Reassembling the front of the main box – it's a challenge to align the primary gear to the layshaft and wriggle it into place



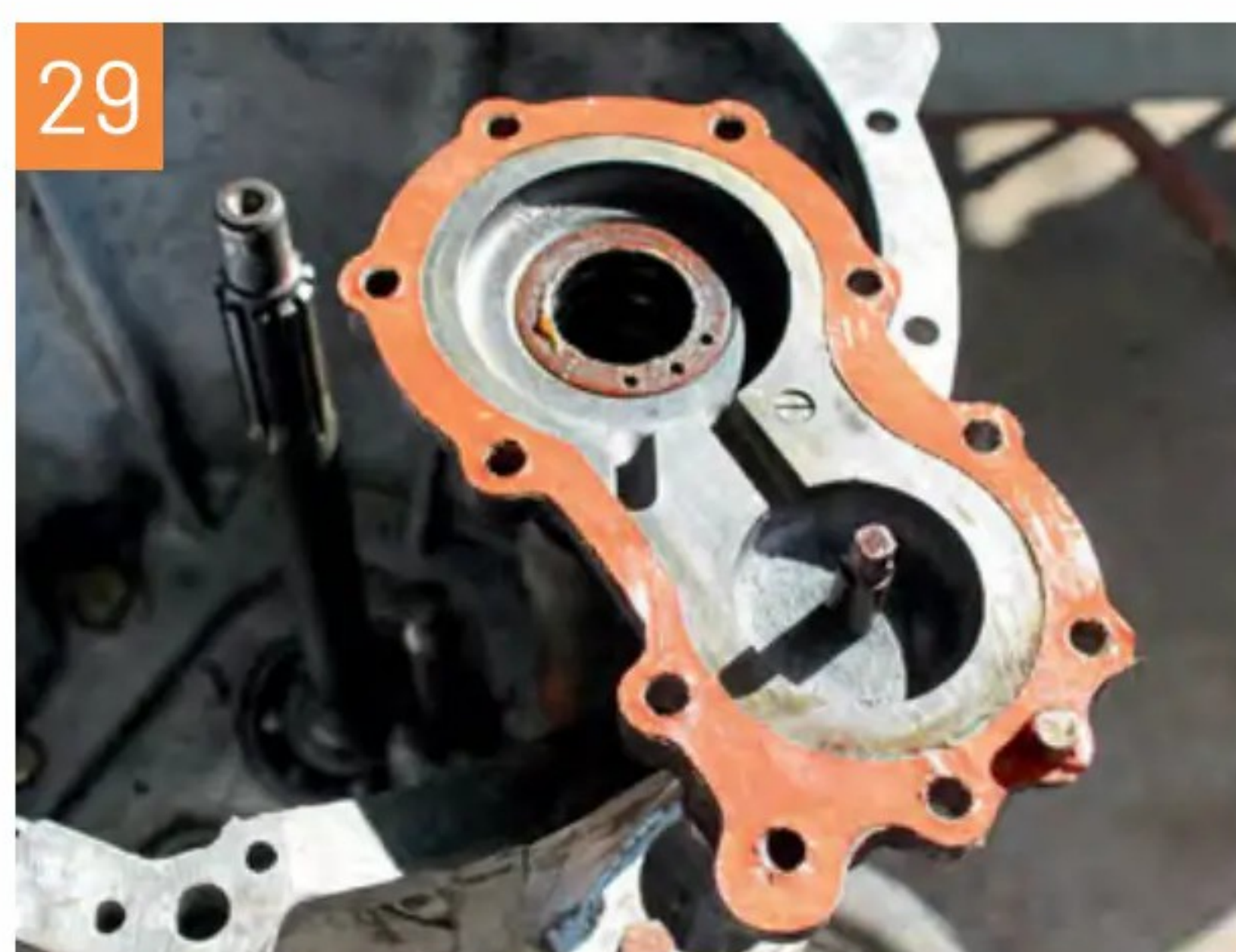
26 It's much easier to align it all when the box is turned upside down – gravity is your friend



27 Looking up past reverse gear – you can just use a lever to carefully position the rear layshaft bearing into place



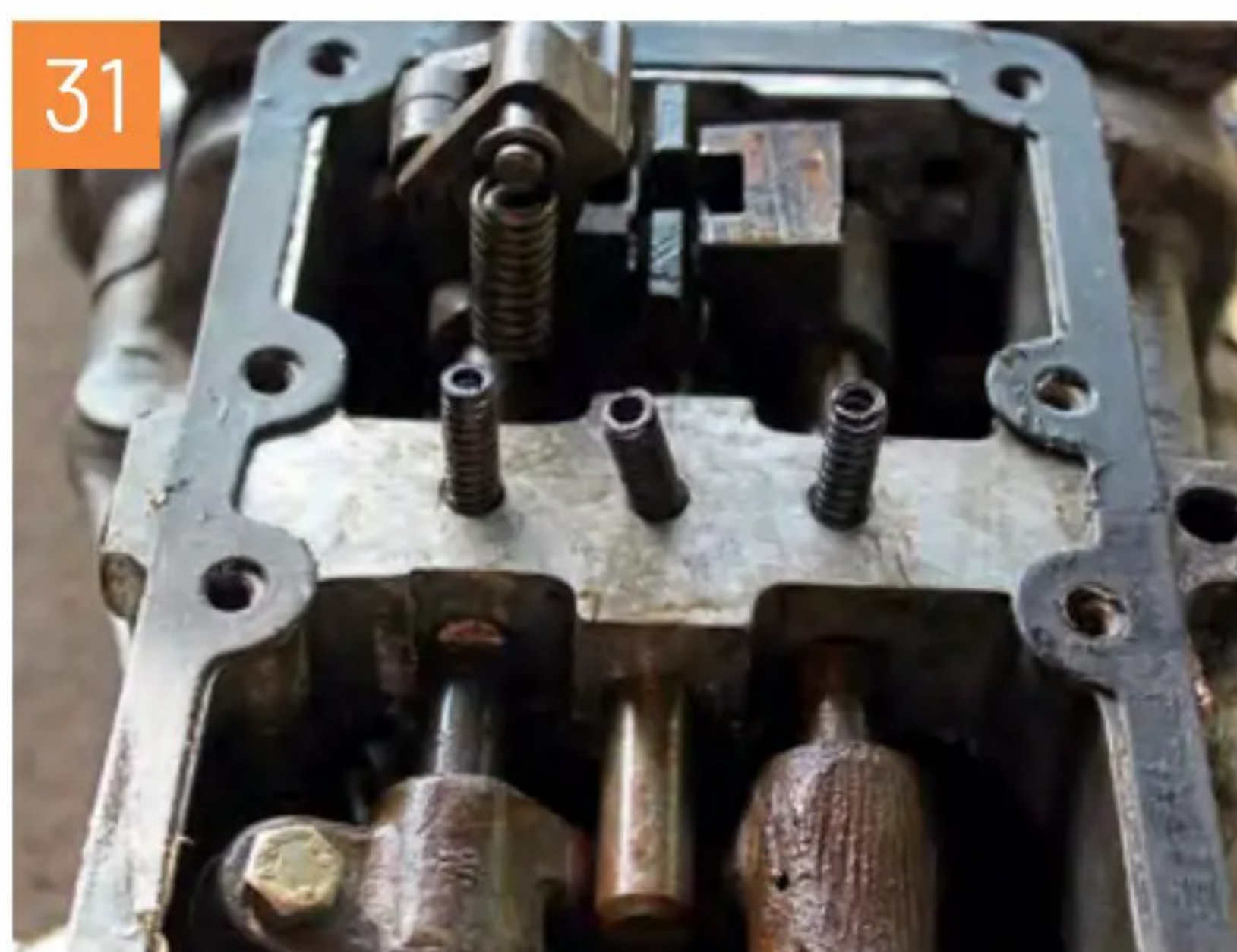
28 Bellhousing bolted on and confirming that the gearbox turned over smoothly



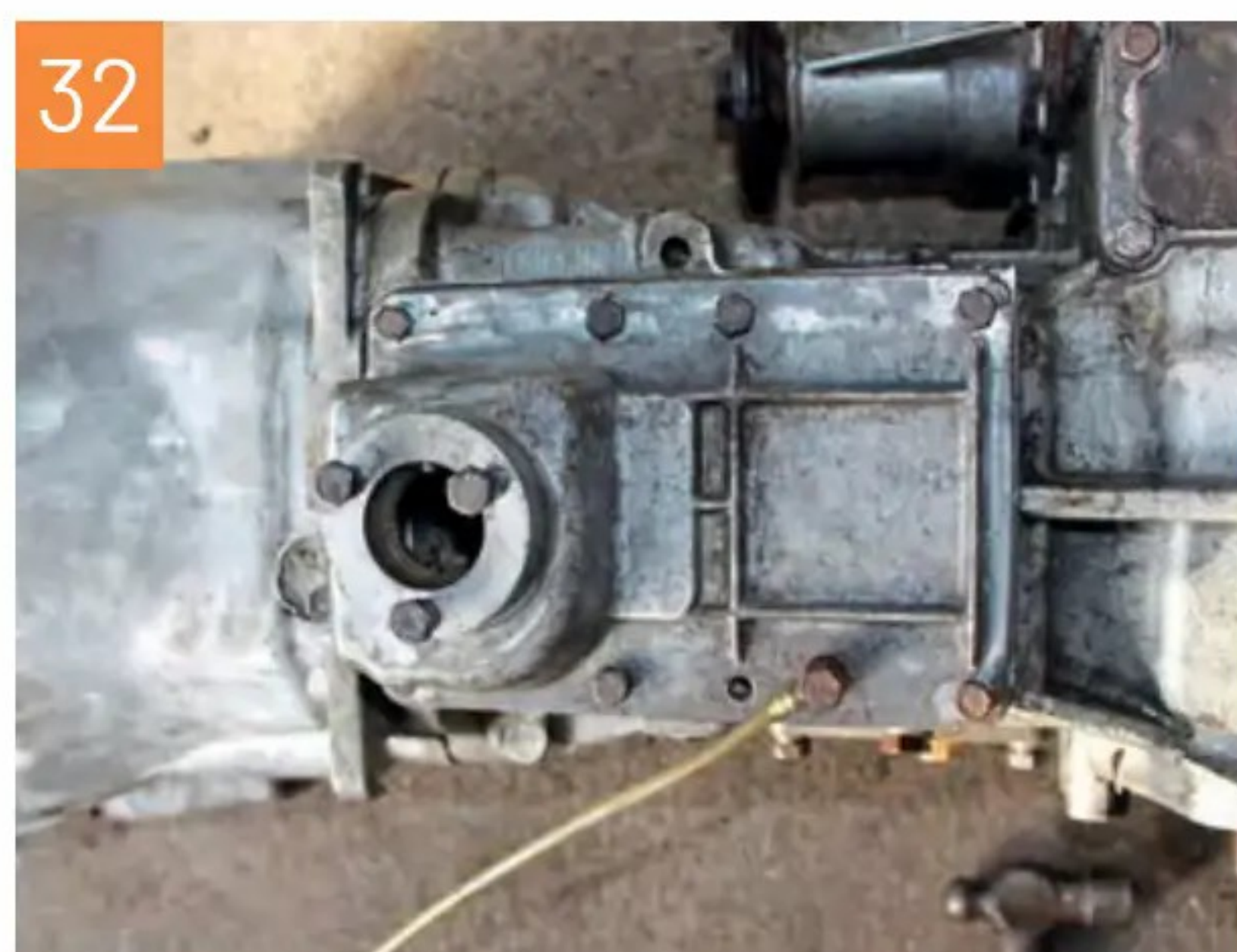
29 The front output housing has a seal for the primary pinion and it also contains an oil pump driven by the layshaft



30 Gearbox side cover bolted back on – in due course I'll replace all the slightly scruffy bolts



31 Detent balls and springs in place before the top cover gets bolted on



32 Top cover bolted on ready for the restored gear lever



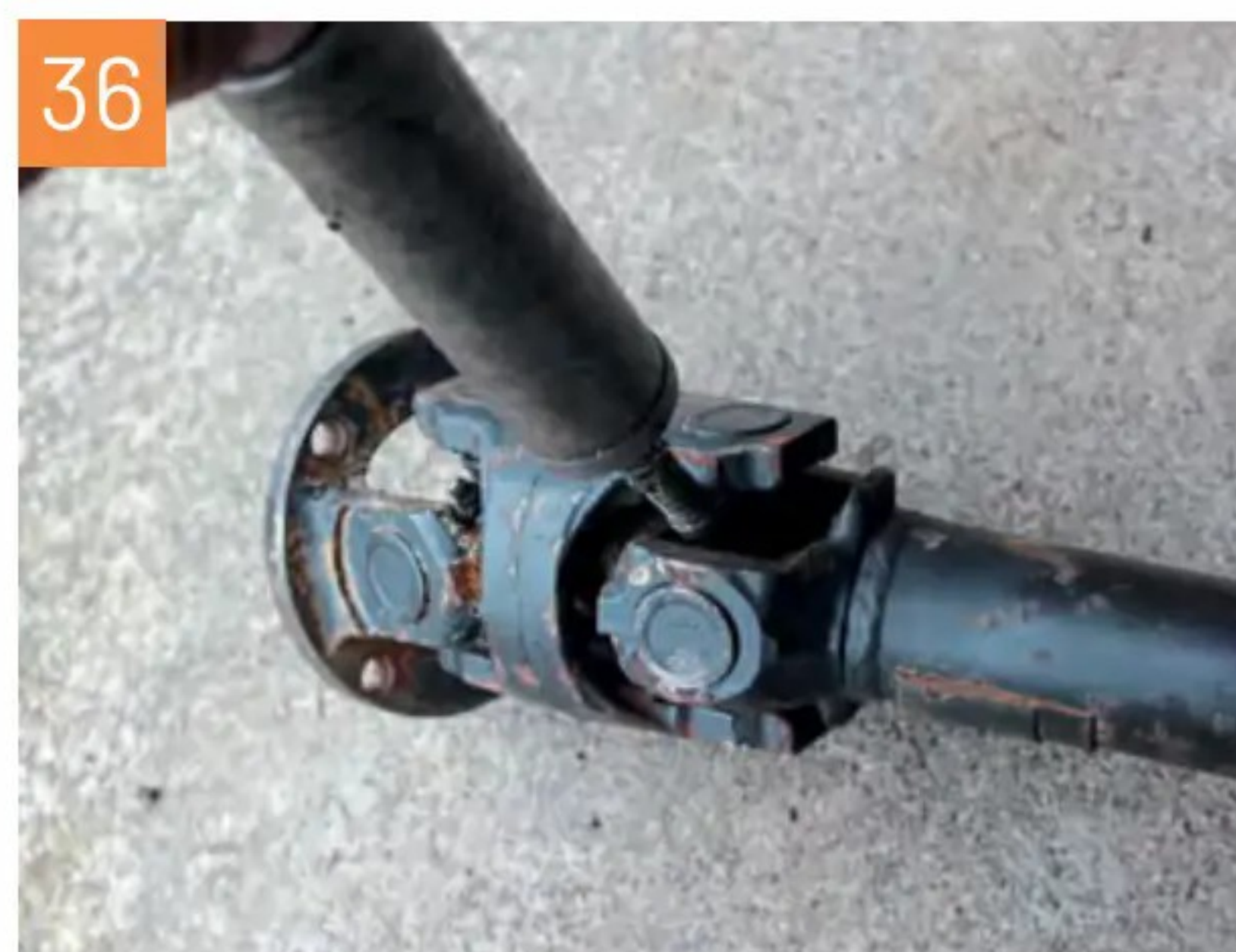
33 Rear output flange cleaned up to ensure a good oil seal



34 New 3/8th prop bolts fitted and circlip going back on



35 Rear output slid back on the rear output shaft and felt seal going on



36 Both props checked out OK, here I'm getting fresh grease into the large double cardan joint

TRAVELS WITH JEMIMA

Marion Morrison recounts the adventures she and husband Tony had travelling around South America in a Series IIA Land Rover during the 1960s

WORDS BY **MARION MORRISON**
PICTURES BY **MARION AND
TONY MORRISON**



'Only one road was surfaced, and that was shattered by countless potholes for the full 480km'

Travelling south down the Pan American highway, Peru



In November 1966, my late husband Tony and I had contracts with BBC TV and Anglia Survival TV to film wildlife in the Andean countries of South America.

Preparing for an extended stay, top of the list was to decide what make and model vehicle to get for the adventure. It had to be four-wheel drive, and capable of operating comfortably on highways, unmade tracks and in extreme conditions, doing hard work low and slow.

Also, it needed to be simple to service and maintain in arduous circumstances and have a well-proven track record of high quality. The decision wasn't difficult – it would be a Series IIA 88in short wheelbase Land Rover with a hard top. We found a very good secondhand, petrol model, with 40,000 miles on the clock, bought it for £500 and named it 'Jemima'.

We shipped Jemima from Liverpool in the UK to Lima in Peru. We already knew some of the locations where we would film, and that we would need equipment and clothing suitable for jungle, mountain and desert.

So it was that in January 1967, I travelled out with 17 pieces of luggage on Ares, a cargo-passenger ship of the Royal Netherlands Steamship Company (KNSM) with friend Sue Mann, who was going to teach in Santiago, Chile. The luggage included the usual expedition and camera gear – mainly Nikon Fs and 16mm Paillard Bolexes – as well as experimental metal planks and heavy chains we had been asked to test in boggy conditions.

It was a 24-day sea journey, through the Panama Canal, to Callao, Lima's port. Tony flew in directly from another assignment in Mexico, and we immediately prepared to »



Aymara women walking to market, with Mt Illimani in the background, Andes, Bolivia

leave for La Paz, the Bolivian capital.

Ahead was a two-or three-day drive, south on the asphalted Pan American highway which runs close to the Peru coast, where condors can be found feeding on dead seals.

We also made a short diversion into the Andes mountains to visit a newly established Vicuna reserve. The Vicuna, the small and much valued relative of the llama, was an endangered species and strenuous efforts, ultimately successful, were being made to save it.

Then followed our first, very cold night camping at altitude, some 4,230m above sea level, alongside Apinococha Lake, where we were up in the icy dawn to film giant coots and flamingos.

On our route lay Peru's second city, Arequipa, at 2,335m, overlooked by the impressive El Misti volcano, and sometimes known as 'the white city' because of the many buildings constructed in ashlar, a volcanic stone.

Then it was out across the high plain, a day's drive, to the town and port of Puno, at the time a godforsaken place, on the shore of Lake Titicaca. Titicaca is the world's highest navigable lake, and for centuries local people have made their homes on 'floating' islands of totora reed, which grows along the shore. We stopped long enough to visit.

The lake lies in both Peru and Bolivia, and at the border, a bridge connects the

two countries. Bolivia is a land about twice the size of France, and back in the early 1960s, it was just about off the map.

Roughly a third of the country is Andean with magnificent snow-capped mountains, and the rest is lowland, often forested with huge rivers leading to the Amazon or the River Plate.

Only one road was surfaced, and that was shattered by countless potholes for the full 480km. Just 3.5m people lived there, and they were largely the ethnic Aymara or Quechua indigenous to the central Andes.

The final part of our journey was a relatively short drive across the flat, treeless altiplano, or high Andean plain, backed by the snowy summits of the Cordillera Real de los Andes.

La Paz, the world's highest capital city, is overlooked by Mt Illimani, 6,438m, and in the 1960s, most buildings were concentrated in a deep bowl some 450m lower than the city's airport.

It was always an extraordinary, unforgettable experience after a long trip to arrive at the edge of the bowl and see the twinkling lights of the city far below.

From this time on, much of Jemima's travel was above 2,700m, with the highest point, over 5,800m on Mt Chacaltaya outside La Paz.

In 1967, the Cuban revolutionary Che



Bogged down in salty marshland, Chipaya, Bolivia

Guevara and his guerrilla group were known to have made their way into Bolivia and were being hunted down by the CIA and the Bolivian military. As a result, foreigners were warned to be particularly careful.

South of La Paz is the mining town of Oruro, which, according to the 1960s South American Handbook, the 'bible' for serious travellers, could be reached by express train in eight hours.

"There is little to interest the tourist", it said. We made it on the dirt road, with a couple of stops, in about one hour less than the train.

From there, our next stop was Santa Ana de Chipaya, some 160km towards the Chilean border. We crossed two rivers, survived one serious 'boggling' and several hours digging – the metal planks and chains were only partially successful – and after about a day, we reached the Chipaya village of thatched round houses built of salty earthen sods and cacti wood.

Only about 1,500 Chipaya survived in this hostile place, and they were desperately poor. The salty marshes surrounding their village did not support crops, and only a few llamas and sheep.

Icy dawn, camping near Apinococha Lake, at over 4000m above sea level, Peru





Marion with remains found in the nearby burial tomb

But traditionally, they hunted flamingos, capturing them with bolasses flung skywards with amazing accuracy. This involved many hours of wading through ice-cold water, and not being used to foreigners with cameras, the hunters were not very cooperative, but we did get some footage.

Outside the village, we filmed ancient burial towers or chullpas, complete with corpses still half-wrapped in hand-woven cloth from a bygone era. Dark brown plaited hair covered some skulls.

Our return to Oruro was not without incident, when we offered to assist the local prefect, whose vehicle was stuck in a river, only to be suspected of being guerrillas.

After ten days in the wilderness, our dishevelled appearance fitted the bill, and we were subsequently detained in police custody in Oruro for several uncomfortable hours before being allowed to return to La Paz.

For long trips away from La Paz, we had to be completely self-sufficient, with petrol stored in oil drums and Jerrycans, and food bought in La Paz's black market.

Essentials included porridge and corned beef, luxuries were Scottish tinned kippers,

baked beans and large flagons of Chilean Undurraga wine. Fresh milk or bread could usually be found along the way.

Our next trip was to the far south, first to Uyuni, a desolate town and centre of the national railway repair shops. It is located on the edge of the great Salar of Uyuni, a magnificent, dried bed of a salt lake and the world's largest, extending for approximately 10,500sq km at an altitude of 3,656m, with water-filled caverns, some hundreds of feet deep, unseen below the salty crust.

Contraband trucks making for Chile were the only vehicles to cross regularly, and to deviate from their crude tracks could spell disaster. Some small islands of cacti and coral dot the salar, and near the edges, in freezing temperatures, workers dug piles of salt, subsequently carried by llamas or trucks to the nearest towns.

Potosi, Bolivia's highest city at 4,090m, is on the route to Uyuni and famous for the Cerro Rico or Rich Hill, a silver mine discovered in 1545, which the Spaniards worked for 200 years, supplying 80 per »



Marion packing gear on Jemima, on the Salar of Uyuni

‘Outside the village we filmed ancient burial towers or chullpas complete with corpses’



Success! Jemima is back on the road, Chipaya, Bolivia



Jemima crossing the River Desaguadero on the way to Chipaya, Bolivia



Camping near the Salar of Uyuni



Camping in the rainforest

cent of the world's silver.

The city was one of the largest in the New World, with a population at one time of over 200,000. Other thriving 'silver' towns also existed, which are now deserted 'ghost towns'.

We aimed to film one, San Antonio de Lipez, which lay at the foot of the snowcapped Nuevo Mundo – New World – mountain, 5,933m, near the frontier with Argentina.

I must slip in a word here to explain that whenever we arrived back in La Paz, we received the most incredible hospitality, particularly from Alan and Lidia Shave – Alan was with the British Embassy – and Peter and Wendy Williams.

Peter, an Englishman, was technically responsible for the electricity supply in La Paz and beyond. It never seemed to bother them that we would turn up dust-covered and tired, and with a load of dirty washing.

In Alan's case, it was more often, "hurry up, get changed, there's a party at" And not only did they look after us, they also gave a home to Jemima, either in a garage or behind gates.

This was essential as left out on the street, in no time Jemima would be devoid of any belongings in the cab, including mirrors,

windscreen wipers, even wheels and tyres.

We made several shorter trips out of La Paz, including to the Puya raimondii at Comanche, a plant peculiar to the Andes and reputedly the world's tallest flower spike, which apparently flowers once every 150 years or so.

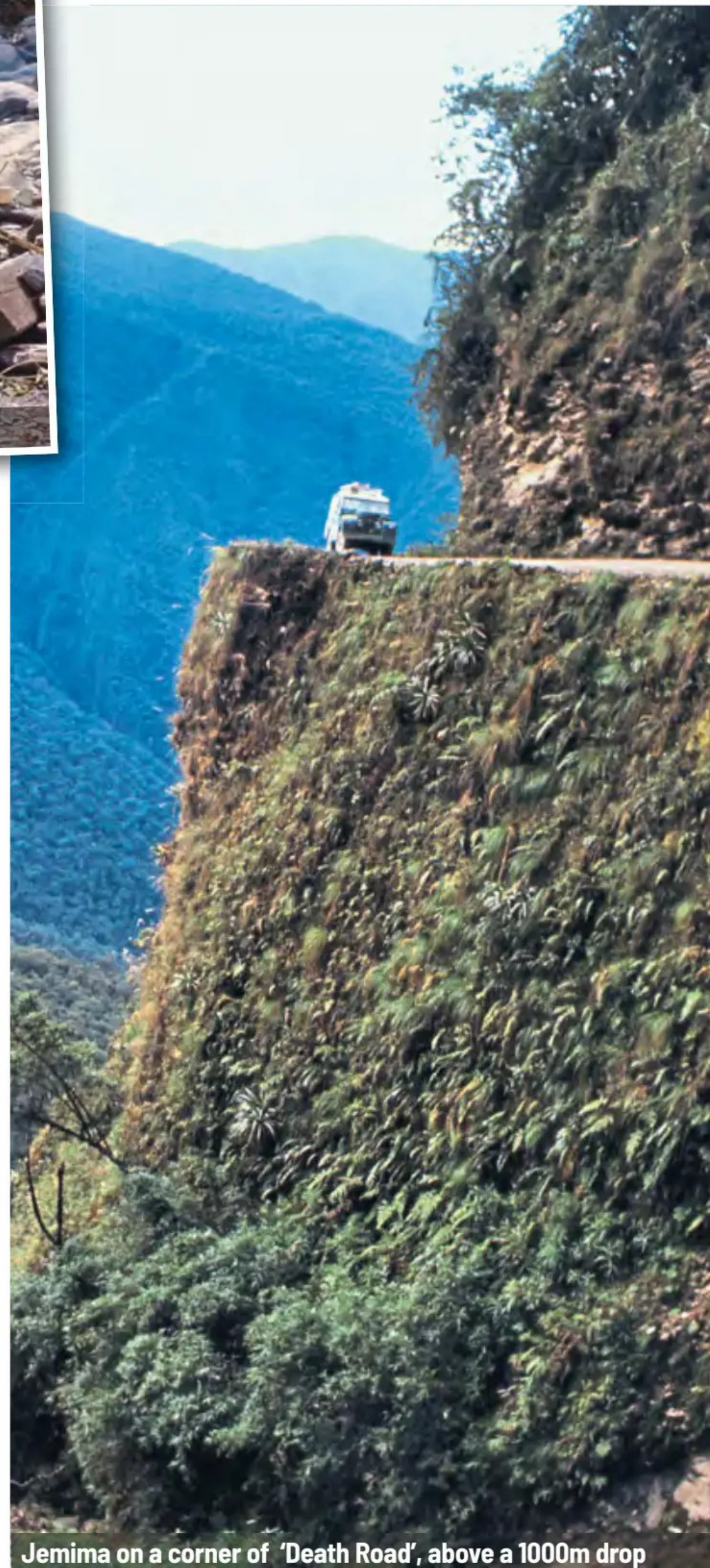
Another was down the infamous 'Death Road' to the Amazon rainforests. Passing the cumbre or high point out of La Paz at almost 5,000m, the road descends through misty cloud forest with a cliff on one side, and a precipitous drop on the other.

A vehicle's width, driving meant constantly sounding the horn, rounding bend after bend, while hoping nothing was coming in the other direction. Backing up to allow for a passing vehicle was extremely hazardous, which was very obvious from the several crosses lining the route. The road was sufficiently infamous that, in recent times, the Top Gear team gave it a go in their televised series.

In closing, I'd like to thank John Katencamp for inspiring me to finally put this story down on paper.

-To be continued next month, where we leave Bolivia, head to Peru, and visit Machu Picchu. CLR

Jemima on a corner of 'Death Road', above a 1000m drop



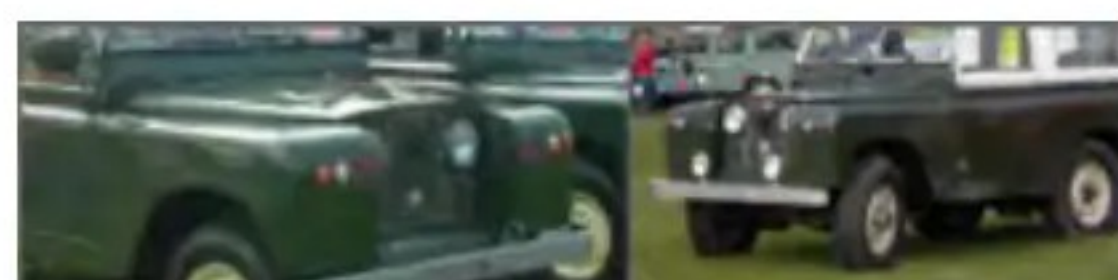
Jemima on the Salar of Uyuni



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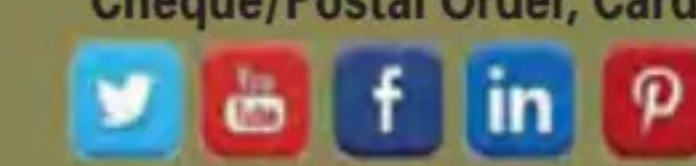
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COOL AS ICE

Coleman’s Pro Cooler is designed with several thoughtful features making it perfect for weekend camping trips

WORDS AND PICTURES **ANDREW STONE**

The Coleman Pro Cooler is a solid offering if you’re looking for a mid-range cooler, thanks to its durable casing and impressive performance. Priced at a more affordable point than some premium competitors, it’s well worth a look if you need a cooler large enough for a family, but one that can still be moved easily thanks to two large built-in wheels and a telescopic handle. Manufactured with a tough, high-density polyethylene (HDPE) plastic exterior and full-foam insulation to both the lid and body, it is a cooler designed for rugged use, which means it’s perfect for Land Rover owners.

The lid is robust enough to double as a seat or a handy ‘coffee’ table, as I found.

A one-handed metal latch provides secure, easy-to-use opening and closure, while an oversized drain plug makes it simple to get rid of melted water without having to tip the entire unit.

For those who prioritise weight, the

Coleman Pro is also lighter than some other coolers in its class, making it easier to transport, although be warned, it is still bulky. The integrated wheels and carry handle won’t do you any favours with packing either, so if you’re concerned about space in the rear of your Land Rover, you need to consider this.

While the manufacturer claims up to five days of ice retention, some real-world tests have suggested it performs best for weekend trips of three to four days, especially with frequent opening.

I used it over three days at the LRO Show in September with ice packs and found it more than adequate for what I needed – keeping my beers and meat cold.

Some reviewers have listed the metal latch as a long-term weak point; however, I had no issues, and if treated properly, in my view, it should last a long time.

In the event ground conditions don’t allow it to be wheeled, two side handles can be used to carry the cooler, either by one or



The 52lt capacity allows for a lot of packing space

two people.

Overall, the appeal for me is its size, which is perfect for my family of three, while the wheels and telescopic handle make it easy to cart around. So, if you’re after a versatile cooler for camping, picnics and festivals, it is certainly one of the better value for money options around. [CLR](#)

SPECIFICATIONS

Model: Coleman Pro 55QT
Capacity: 52lt
Use: Multi-day
Handles: Two side handles
Wheeled: Yes
Outer Material: HDPE plastic
Inner Material: HDPE plastic
Antibacterial liner: Yes
Water drain: Yes
Inner Size (WxLxH): 51cm x 30cm x 38cm
Outer Size (WxLxH): 65cm x 48cm x 50cm
Insulation material: Polyurethane
Weight: 12.5kg
Price: £225 (members’ price at Go Outdoors)



Two side handles make it easy to carry



The lid can double as a table or seat



The cooler is made from durable materials



If it’s really packed and heavy, it can be wheeled

COOKING ON GAS

Andrew Stone tests the Campingaz Kitchen 2 Multi Cook Plus

WORDS AND PICTURES **ANDREW STONE**

For many Land Rover owners, their vehicle is a passport to adventure and a way of life that demands a certain level of self-sufficiency.

So, whether you're out on a day trip greenlaning or a longer expedition, a good meal and a brew can make the difference between a trip to remember or one you'd rather forget.

That's where the Campingaz Kitchen 2 Multi Cook Plus comes in. It's a versatile and reliable cooking solution that I recently got to test for a weekend while attending the LRO Show in September.

Although a large unit, the appeal of the Kitchen 2 is its clever all-in-one design. It's more than just a two-burner hob as it also has a small but effective grill, making it possible to toast a bacon and egg sandwich for breakfast or char some sausages for dinner.

The twin hob burners are independently controlled, offering a decent flame range

from a gentle simmer for beans to a fierce heat for a proper brew.

Set up on its four legs, the unit is stable and at a good height for cooking. The lid doubles as a windshield, a clever feature that saves you from battling the elements to get a flame to hold, although you've got to position it right the first time.

Thanks to the twin hob, you can have two burners on the go at the same time. It's easy to clean and packs away neatly, which is a massive plus when you're dealing with a muddy campsite and limited space.

However, while relatively compact, the Kitchen 2 is not the lightest option on the market, which might be a consideration for those with weight-sensitive setups.

If you're just after a brew on your green lane, then a smaller unit is probably the answer, but for longer trips and bigger families, the Kitchen 2 is well worth the effort as it can be easily set up on a tabletop.

It takes a bit longer to put it up using the four screw in legs, but of course, then you have a standalone unit. The grill is a great idea, but its small size means that for anything more than one or two people, you're cooking in batches.

The Kitchen 2 operates off 904 and 907 gas cylinders using a Campingaz butane hose and regulator kit, which are sold separately.

Overall, it is an impressive piece of kit for Land Rover owners who value versatility and convenience.

It's a solid, reliable unit that elevates your campsite cooking beyond the basic single-burner setup. While it has a few drawbacks, its ability to fry, boil, and grill from one compact unit makes it a strong contender for a permanent spot in your expedition kit. [CLR](#)

SPECIFICATIONS

Size: 107cm x 50cm x 76cm

Fuel Source: R 904/907 Cylinder

Ignition Type: Piezo

No of burners: Three

Runtime R904: Five hours 30 minutes

Runtime R907: Eight hours 25 minutes

Weight (kg): 5.4 kg

Price: Go Outdoors £142 (members' price)



A handy shelf under the hob for storage



When not in use the lid folds flat



The Campingaz Kitchen 2 Multi Cook Plus has a two-burner hob and grill



Can be used on legs or set up in the back of a vehicle

CHRISTMAS GIFT GUIDE

The latest and coolest gifts, gadgets and gear for Land Rover enthusiasts

If you have a product you'd like featured on these pages, email andrew.stone@keypublishing.com



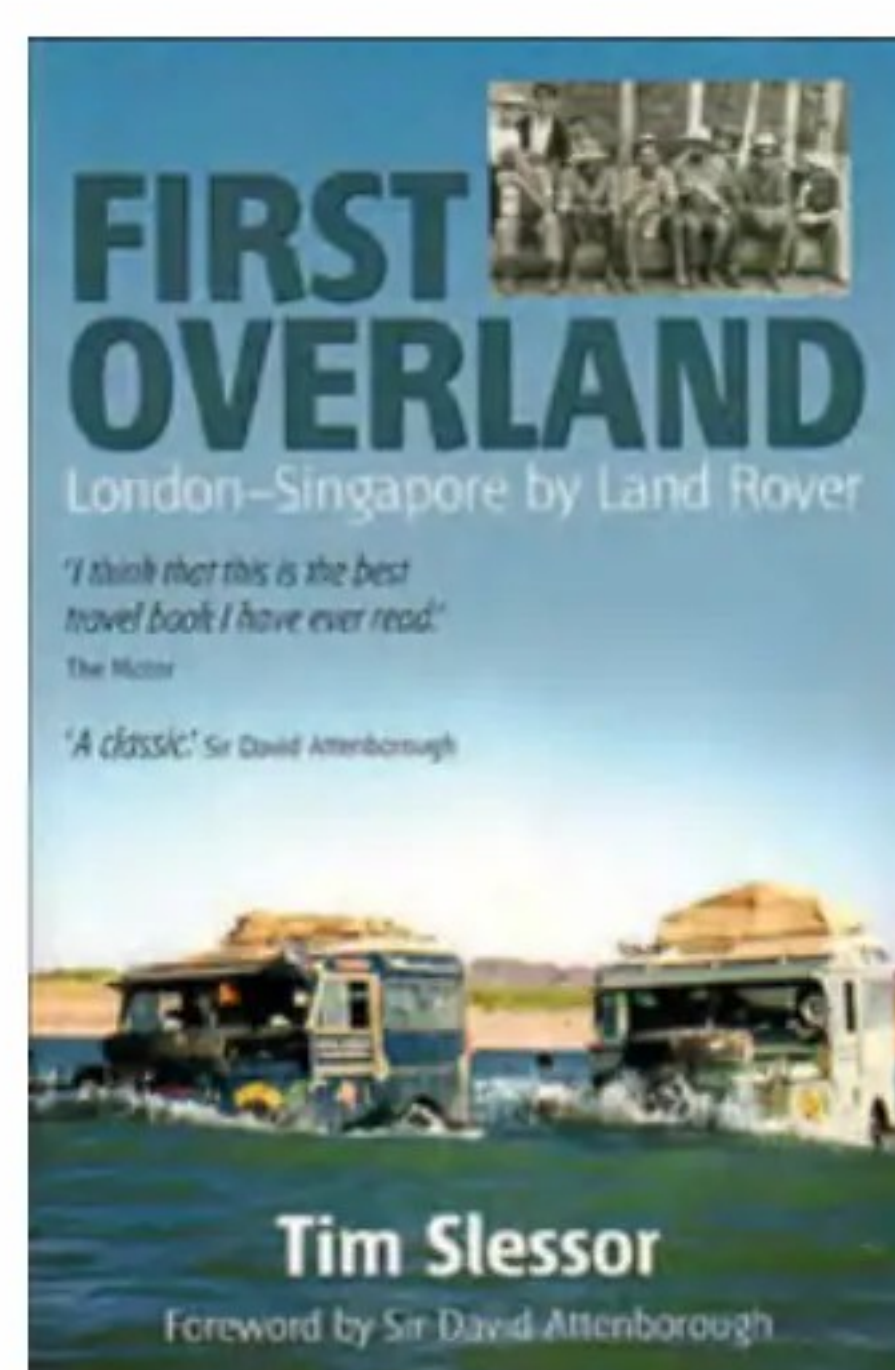
SERIES ONE

Featuring an enclosed cab and open rear compartment, this pick-up version of the Series One was perfect for transporting anything from machinery to livestock. The 1:43 scale model kit includes 39 parts, instruction sheet, paint layout sheet and decals. Available from <https://uk.airfix.com> for £14.99



FIRST OVERLAND

Seventy years on, this bestselling book, First Overland, still makes for a perfect gift for Land Rover enthusiasts. It tells the story of six university students travelling from London to Singapore in two Series Ones. Available from www.amazon.co.uk from £16.99



TIME WATCH

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JERRYCAN BAR



Made from real military-style steel Jerrycans, in a colour of your choice and personalised with your own design, they come with three glasses, wall mounts and lock and key. Available from <https://jerrycancompany.com> from £163

MILITARY WORKHORSE

Perfect for beginner modellers, this 1:76 scale LWB Land Rover (Hard Top and Trailer) kit has 45 pieces and four scheme options, so you can create a whole fleet of these magnificent military vehicles. Available from <https://uk.airfix.com> for £11.99



WATER BOWL

Don't forget to spoil your pet this Christmas with this Yeti x Land Rover Classic Dog Bowl, the ultimate companion for your pet's adventures. **Available from www.jaguarlandroverclassic.com for £57**



CLASSIC DEFENDER

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NYLON WALLET

This textured nylon wallet features a Defender wordmark and chamfering stitch detail, and contrast grey interior with space for three cards and a coin pocket. **Available from <https://shop.landrover.co.uk> for £43**



MULTI TOOL

This advanced multi-tool includes, among others, hammer, pliers, glass breaker, blade, saw, steak knife and wire cutters. Fabricated in durable anodised metal and finished with a white Defender logo. Comes with a handy carry pouch. **Available from <https://shop.landrover.co.uk> for £45**



GREAT GIFT

Give the gift that keeps on giving – a subscription to Classic Land Rover magazine, the exciting monthly publication dedicated to Series and classic Land Rovers. **Available from <https://shop.keypublishing.com> from £15.50**



CANVAS APRON

These waxed canvas aprons offer practical protection for any job. The rugged material is designed to handle tough tasks while keeping you comfortable and organised. **Available from www.exmoortrim.co.uk for £46.14**



CHRISTMAS CARDS

All loaded up with presents, this festive Land Rover powers through the snow to spread joy far and wide. A fun and nostalgic Christmas card design with all profits supporting Help for Heroes. The 10 pack is available from <https://shop.helpforheroes.org.uk> for £4.95



HERITAGE SHIRT

This shirt is made with 100% cotton and takes design cues from the vintage styling of the original Expedition team.

It includes the Land Rover Heritage logo on the sleeve and a woven label with the original number plates of the two Oxford and Cambridge Series Ones stitched into the bottom hem.

Choose from blue and navy. Available in sizes XS to XXXL Available from <https://shop.parks.uk.com> for £50



CUP COLLECTION

This special set of expedition cups, featuring every model from the Series One to the Defender 110, is inspired by Land Rover's reputation as a symbol of exploration. The cups are perfect for keeping your morning coffee hot or your evening drink cold.

Available from www.fieldtripsupplies.com for £77.95



GOOD READ

A Little Book of Land Rover Trivia is the ultimate gift for Land Rover fans, packed with fascinating facts, legendary stories, and surprising details from the brand's rich history.

Available from www.amazon.co.uk for £14.99 (hardcover)



BOTTLE STOPPER

This classic Land Rover bottle-stopper offers a stylish and witty way to preserve your drinks and is perfect for lovers of classic reds and classic Land Rovers. Available from www.fhinds.co.uk for £16.99



DRIVING EXPERIENCE

Embark on a driving adventure of epic proportions with this Vintage Land Rover Experience for two. Led by an experienced driver, you'll have the opportunity to get behind the wheel of one of six classic Land Rovers through the beautiful Welsh countryside. Available from www.virginexperiencedays.co.uk for £355



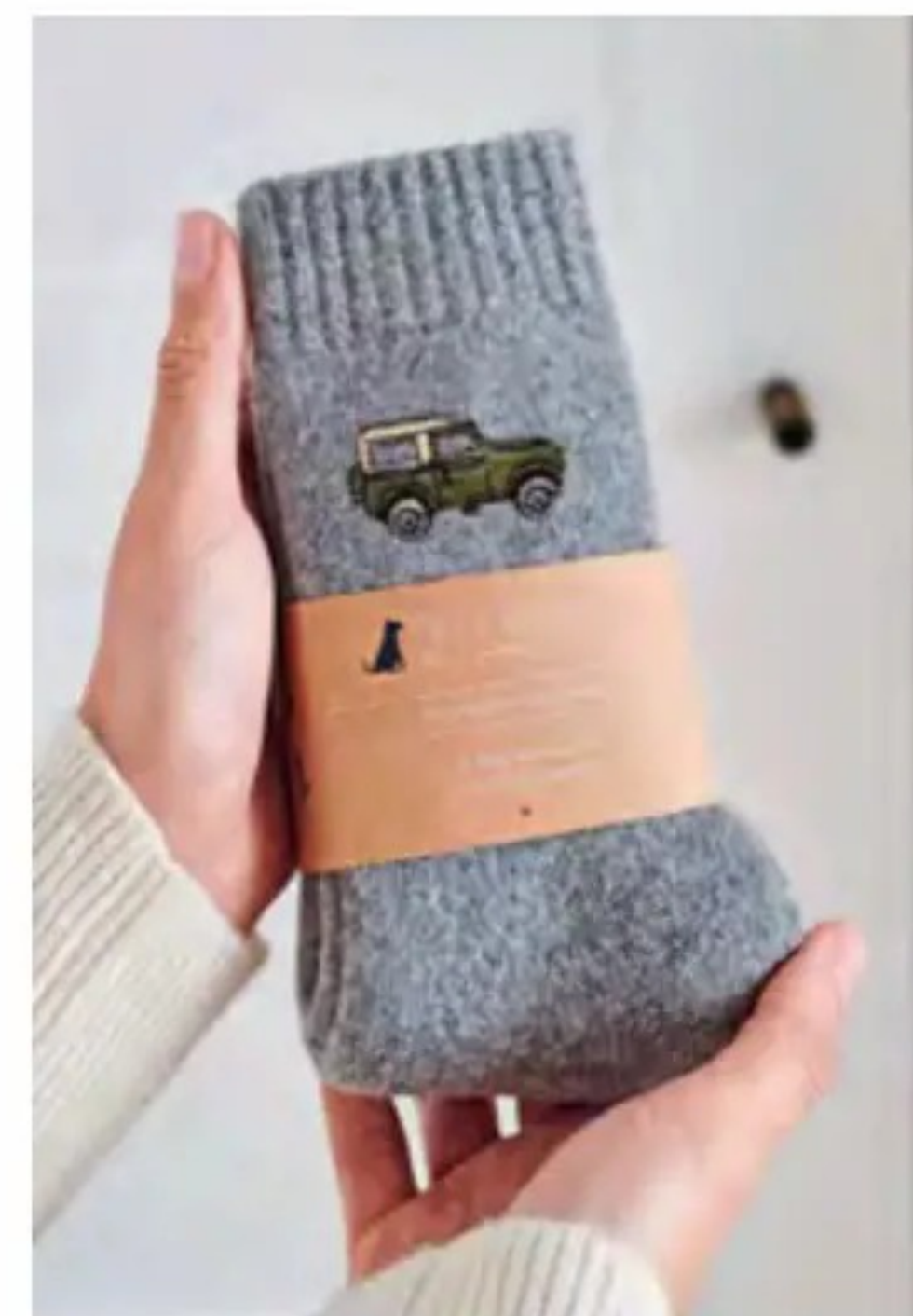
WALL CLOCK

This handmade personalised wall clock is based on the speedometer of the Land Rover Series II. Each clock is handmade to order and can be personalised with the mileometer reading as a date, making it the perfect gift. Available from www.notonthehighstreet.com £50



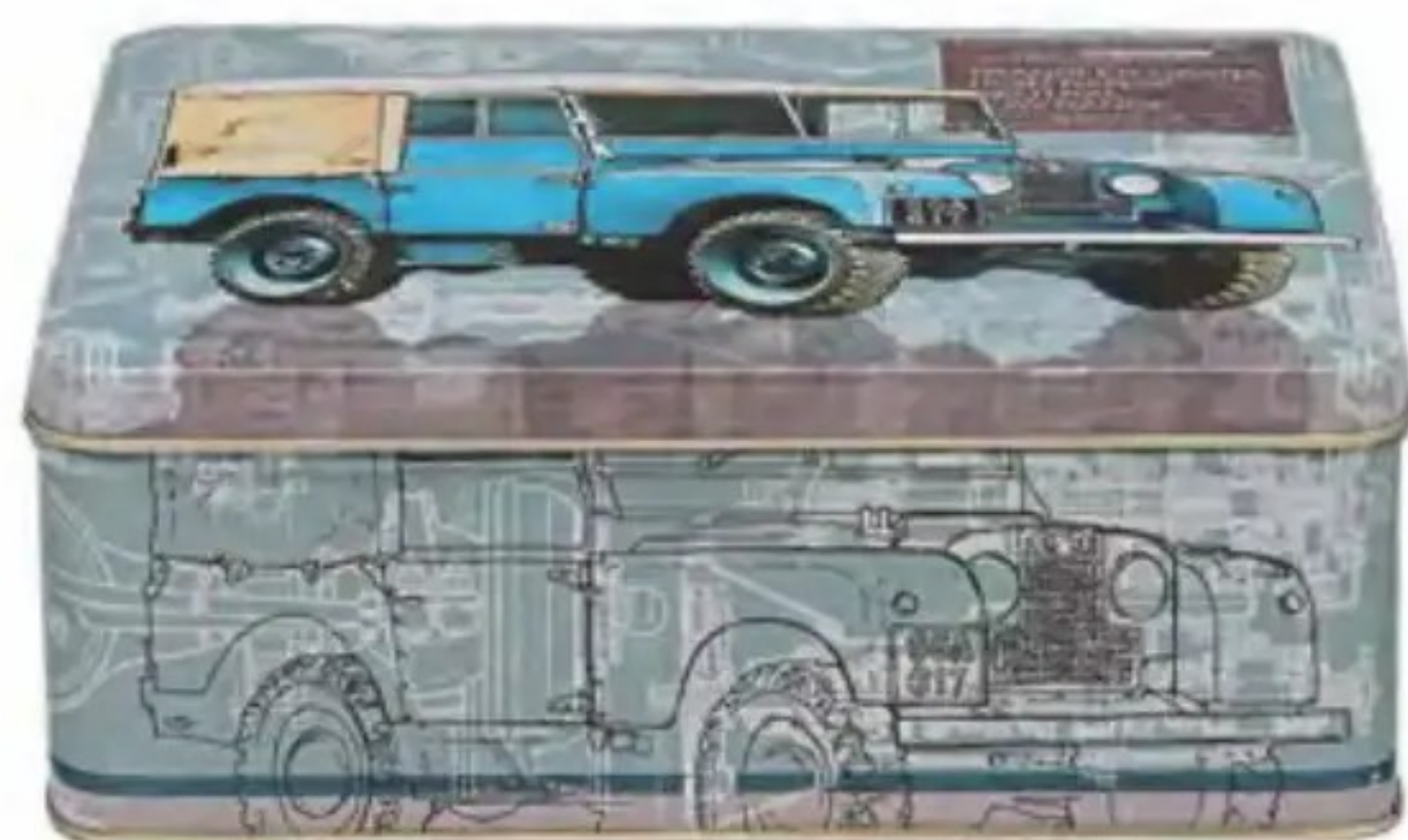
WALKING SOCKS

These exceptionally soft Land Rover socks will keep feet warm on countryside walks and are ideal for getting cosy at home. They feature an embroidered Land Rover on a dark grey wool background. Available from www.etsy.com for £16.95



BISCUIT SELECTION

The Moore's Land Rover biscuit selection tin contains three packs of biscuits: chocolate chip, coffee crunch and lemon and stem ginger. Available from www.the-gourmet-grocer.co.uk for £13.45



CHOCOHOOLIC

Select between eight or 16 luxury Belgian chocolates, which come presented in a brown box with a Land Rover and a funny quote on the wrapper. Boxes can be personalised with a name or message. Available from www.etsy.com from £10.50



BUCKET HAT

This packable, scrunchable, lightweight headwear classic is ready for adventure, from the beach to the street to the trail. It is made from breathable 100% cotton with eyelet ventilation. Available from www.etsy.com for £22.44



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These beautiful green embroidered handkerchiefs will make a wonderful gift for someone who loves Land Rovers. Made with 100% cotton, these are also a stylish accessory that will look great in any country gentleman's top pocket! Available from www.countryandhome.co.uk for £14.99



A LUCKY BREAK

The first Camel Trophy took place 45 years ago, **John Carroll** recalls his experiences of the 1991 event

WORDS AND PICTURES **JOHN CARROLL**



The 1991 British team Discovery leaving the start ceremony in Dar Es Salaam

The 1986 Australia event marked the first Camel Trophy with a British team, as Jerry Gatley and David Scott drove a Land Rover Ninety from Cooktown to Darwin across northern Australia.

This ensured the event's coverage in the UK 4x4 magazines I was just starting to buy, and when I got my first Land Rover, an 88in Series III.

It all sounded great; kitted out Land Rovers, almost impassable routes and far-flung places, all the ingredients for memorable adventures.

By 1989, I'd packed in a sensible local authority job and, through freelancing to open the door, had taken steps to get a job that collided with my two and four-wheeled interests, in the altogether more precarious worlds of 4x4 and chopper magazines.

My first full-time job was on 4x4 Driver magazine, where one day, an invitation to the two-day UK Camel selections on army land near Camberley in Surrey landed on my desk.

It featured winch training, wooden bridge building and 4x4 driving as well as aptitude tests. Being new to the idea of being 'media' at an event, I had no idea that Camel's PR organisation would sort out a hotel room for me, so I took my tent and pitched it next to the candidates' tents.

Many jocular remarks were made, as it didn't go unnoticed. From then on, I went to anything to do with the Camel Trophy that I was invited to, including selections and training weekends in pursuit of magazine stories.

'As well as being a journalist, I'd need to help Andy and Tim wherever I could'

In the early months of 1991, I was invited to the International Selections for the Tanzania Burundi event at a site outside Paris.

Here, the four finalists from all 17 competing nations were whittled down to the final two and two reserves, so it was a big deal as a magazine story. The two in-car journalists and other UK journalists had been invited, and my name wasn't on the list, so it was the end of the road for me: until the guy from The Times couldn't go, that was.

I was sitting at my desk in the corner of a Leeds printworks where the magazine was based when I got a call from a member of Camel's UK PR team, who said: "We have a vacancy for a journalist in the UK team car. Would you like to go? There's just time for you to get the necessary jabs."

The prospect of vaccinations for yellow fever, typhoid and hepatitis A didn't worry me, so in the space of a few seconds, I'd accepted the invitation.

Soon after, in London, I again met the duo who comprised the team, namely Andy Street and Tim Dray. I also met the other journalist with whom I'd be sharing the back seat of the four-door Discovery for the duration of the event, Howard Lees.

We all went and bought some outdoor gear and a stack of packet meals and arranged to meet at the airport in a few weeks. Camel's UK people sent us Pelican cases and shirts with Camel logos and Union flags on – it was

somehow reassuring that the labels inside said Marks and Spencer rather than some fancy outdoor brand.

I treated myself to some new boots from an army surplus shop in Liverpool, ordered a mountain of Fujichrome 35mm film: before I knew it, we were on our way.

We flew to Dar Es Salaam from where the Camel Trophy would start. I knew that, as well as being a journalist, I'd need to help Andy and Tim wherever I could.

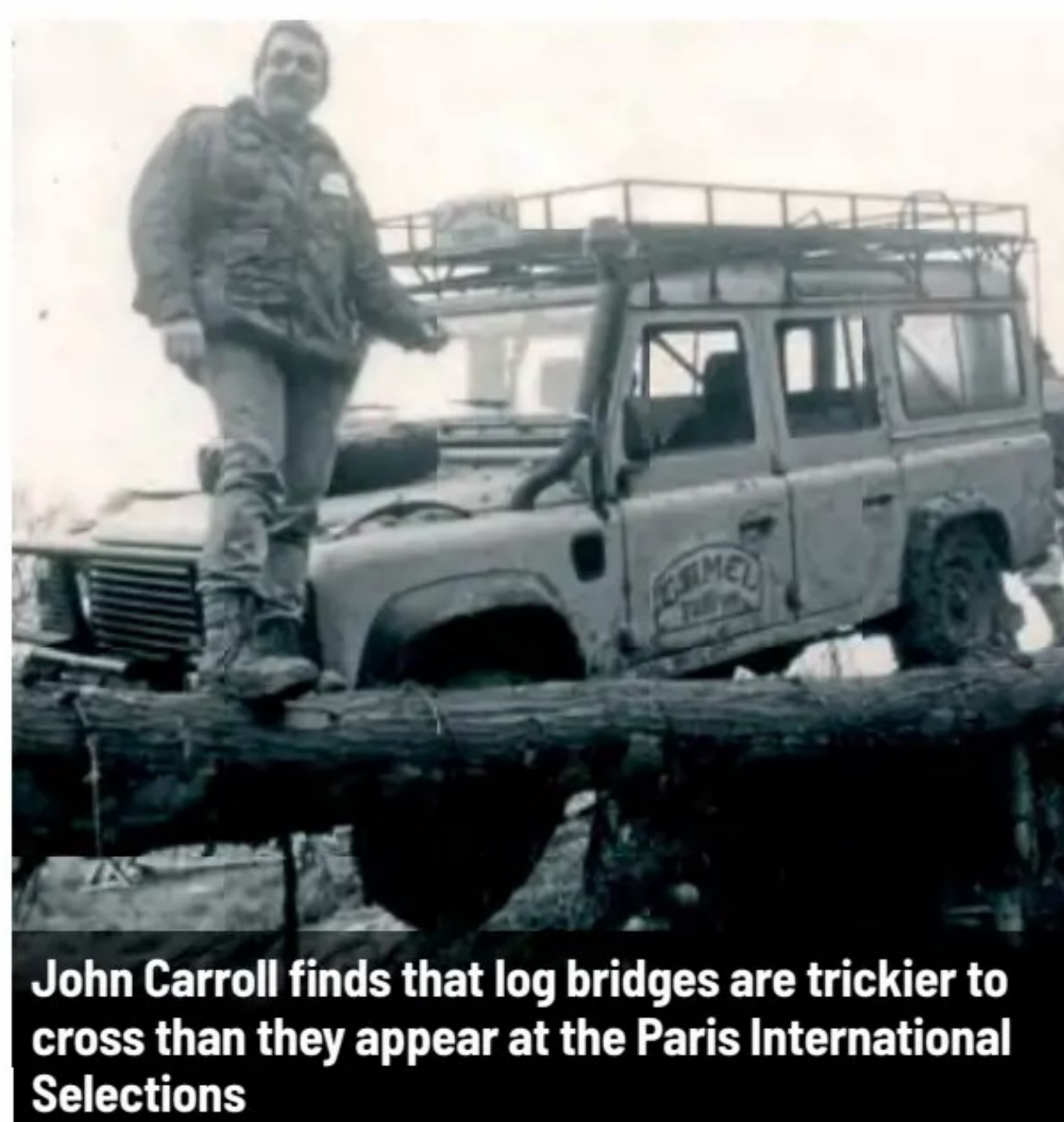
This, for example, meant I got involved in lots of winching. I also remember making gallons of tea with the Kelly kettle more than once when a few Land Rovers were stuck and sweaty crews were digging: muddy water purified out of the vehicles' ruts, heated with a drop of diesel and powdered milk.

In doing so, I remembered my mum's admonishment to boil the water vigorously to kill anything in it. She didn't mean a 300Tdi Discovery, though!

The tea was probably horrible, but damn, it tasted good there in the mud, and there was never any left. I could probably write pages of anecdotes, but that illustrates what was a life-changing experience.

After the event, Howard Lees was killed in a light aircraft crash. Andy Street and Tim Dray are still about.

The latter has done a lot of engineering for Land Rover, and for me, the Camel was the biggest break of what's become a 35+ year career in magazines. I was no longer a bloke who just wrote greenlaning stories; people now returned my phone calls, so I'm still here. **CLR**



John Carroll finds that log bridges are trickier to cross than they appear at the Paris International Selections



John Carroll on the right with US team member Bill Burke

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517588G	SWB		Rear	11 Leaf	RHS
517589G	SWB		Rear	11 Leaf	LHS
276034G	LWB		Front	11 Leaf	RHS
265627G	LWB	Diesel & Petrol	Front	11 Leaf	RHS
279678G	LWB		Rear	10 Leaf	RHS
279679G	LWB		Rear	10 Leaf	LHS
272967G	LWB	Heavy-duty	Rear	8 Leaf	RHS
272968G	LWB	Heavy-duty	Rear	8 Leaf	LHS
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